English Translations of

Majmoo'al-Fatawa of late Scholar Ibn Bazz (R)

Second Edition

By:

Sheikh `Abdul `Aziz Bin `Abdullah ibn `AbdulRahman ibn Bazz (May Allah forgive and reward *al-Firdouse* to him and his parents)

He was The Mufti of **Kingdom of Saudi Arabia,** Chairman of the Council of Senior Scholars, and Chairman of Department of Scholarly Research and Ifta'

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In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

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The Book of Foodstuff

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1- Default permissibility of the meat of animals slaughtered by the People of the Book

as long as their way of slaughtering is unknown

From 'Abdul 'Aziz Bin 'Abdullah Ibn Baz **to His Excellency, respected brother Shaykh S. N. Dh., may Allah guide you to all goodness. Amen.**

Peace, mercy and blessings of Allah be upon you.

I have received your honorable letter that involved four questions. May Allah extend His guidance to you and may He grant me, you and all the Muslims, sound understanding of His Deen (religion) and steadfastness therein. Following are the questions and their respective answers:

First: You mentioned that you have abstained from eating all types of meat believing that they are not slaughtered according to Islamic law or the way of the People of the Book, the Jews and Christians. That is, the Name of Allah is not mentioned upon slaughtering them. So, you ask, "Is it lawful or unlawful to eat this meat?"

A: Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) states, (Made lawful to you this day are At-Tayyibât [all kinds of Halâl (lawful) foods, which Allâh has made lawful (meat of slaughtered eatable animals, milk products, fats, vegetables and fruits)]. The food (slaughtered cattle, eatable animals) of the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) is lawful to you and yours is lawful to them.) till the end of the verse.

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This verse indicates to us that the food of the People of the Book is lawful for us, knowing that the People of the Book are the Jews and Christians. It is lawful to eat their slaughtered animals unless we know that they have followed other than the way ordained for slaughtering edible animals, such as killing the animal by strangulation, by electric shock, by shooting in the head or similar methods. For, the animals slaughtered in this way are considered strangled or killed by violent blow, and therefore, it will not be lawful for us to consume. This is because we are not allowed to eat the animal that has been strangled or killed by a violent blow even if it is a Muslim that has slaughtered it. However, if we do not know how they slaughtered the animal, then it is allowed for us to consume it following the instructions in the Noble Verse quoted above. Besides, the following is an answer which we have previously provided regarding this question, so that you may benefit from it.

As for not mentioning the Name of Allah on their slaughtered animals, it is due to their ignorance of the ruling. However, this does not prevent the permissibility of their sacrifices (for the Muslims), as is the case with the Muslim who forgets to mention the Name of Allah while slaughtering or is unaware of the ruling. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says, (Our Lord! Punish us not if we forget or fall into error) It is also authentically reported that when the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) recited this verse he said, (Allah said in reply: "I did") Moreover, the Almighty says in Surah Al-Ahzab, (And there is no sin on you concerning that in which you made a mistake, except in regard to what your hearts deliberately intend. And Allâh is Ever Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.) It is also reported from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) that he said, (Indeed, Allah has forgiven my Ummah (Muslim Nation)

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their mistake, their forgetfulness and what they have been forced to do) Reported by Ibn Majah and Al-Hakim. It is to be noted that there is weakness in the chain of narration of this Hadith. However,

there are many other Hadiths supporting it.

2- The default ruling on the food of the People of the Book is permissibility

Q: What is the ruling regarding what was declared during a conference held in America that one of its recommendations was to beware of some products because they contain pork? Such products include soap, toothpaste, cheese, etc. Please instruct us regarding this? Do you have any information about this conference and such products that were specified?

A: We have received some questions regarding the products mentioned by the questioner and what was discussed in this conference. They were referred to specialized authorities in the Kingdom which responded that no such products have been brought to the Kingdom.

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Moreover, as far as we know, no information have been proven true other than that mentioned by these specialized authorities with regard to the claim that some products containing pork or its fat are imported into the Kingdom from the food of the People of the Book. It should thus be noted that the food of the People of the Book is basically lawful unless it is proven to be containing prohibited ingredients. Allah(may He be Glorified and Exalted) states, ﴾O you who believe (in the Oneness of Allâh - Islâmic Monotheism)! Eat of the lawful things that We have provided you with, and be grateful to Allâh, if it is indeed He Whom you worship.﴿ Allah is the Grantor of success and guidance.

3. The ruling on eating the meat slaughtered by Christians

Q.: Is it permissible to eat the meat slaughtered by Christians in our present time, knowing that they adopt various methods of slaughtering, such as using machines and anesthetics?

A: It is permissible to eat the meat slaughtered by Christians, unless it is slaughtered in a way that is not legal. Basically, it is lawful to eat the meat slaughtered by Christians, just as the meat slaughtered by the Muslims. For, Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says, ﴾The food (slaughtered cattle, eatable animals) of the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) is lawful to you and yours is lawful to them.﴿

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4- The ruling on pork fat

This message is sent by `Abdul `Aziz bin `Abdullah ibn Baz to the noble Shaykh F. T., may Allah increase you in useful knowledge and faith, Amen!

As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh (May Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you!)

I have received your noble message that was sent on 11/5/1387 A.H., and read what it contains of questions.

Your letter contains a question about the ruling on pork fat. You have mentioned that you were informed that some modern scholars claim the permissibility of it.

A: The opinion of the Four Imams and the dominant majority of scholars is the prohibition of pork fat. They said that the ruling on pork fat is subordinate to the ruling on pork flesh. Besides, the opinion reported by Imam Al-Qurtuby and scholar Al-Shawkany is that the whole Muslim nation have unanimously agreed on the impermissibility of pork flesh. This is because if a superior thing is prohibited, things inferior to it will be prohibited by corollary. Moreover, the ruling on flesh will be applied to fat if it is generally announced. Therefore, the fat will be prohibited exactly like the flesh. Moreover, the harms resulting from flesh will also result from fat because of it being naturally connected. Here, it is authentically reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) prohibited of all parts of pork, knowing that the Sunnah (whatever is reported from the Prophet) explains and points out the meanings of the Qur'an.

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As far as we know, no scholar has contradicted this opinion. And even if we suppose that some scholars oppose it, such would be a rare opposition to the consensus of scholars and the whole nation. It was reported by Al-Bukhari and Muslim in the Two Sahih (authentic) Books of Hadith (i.e., Al-Bukhari and Muslim) from Jabir (may Allah be pleased with him) ﴾That the Prophet (peace be upon him) addressed the people on the Day of the Conquest (of Makkah) saying: Verily, Allah and His Messenger have forbidden the sale of wine, carcass, pork and idols.﴿ Thus, he (peace be upon him) joined pork with alcohol and dead animals without excluding its fat. Moreover, he generally prohibited selling it, just as he prohibited selling alcohol and dead animals. This is an evident injunction on the prohibition of it. There are many other Hadiths that point out this meaning. Besides, I have written an answer concerning the wisdom behind the prohibition of pork, and I will send you a copy of it along with a copy of two other books written on this issue so that you to read them. I ask Allah to grant us all sound understanding of His religion, the power to advise His Servants and call to His religion, being guided by knowledge and wisdom. He is the Most Generous and Most Bountiful. As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh.

5- The ruling on eating meat

sold in non-Muslim countries

Q: What is the ruling on eating the meat sold in non-Muslim countries? Is it lawful to eat it or not?

A: Scholars have unanimously agreed to the prohibition of eating meat slaughtered by idolaters, atheists and other disbelievers besides the Jews, Christians and Magians. On the other hand, they have unanimously agreed to the permissibility of the animals slaughtered by the People of the Book from among the Jews and Christians. However, they differed regarding animals slaughtered by Magians, who worship fire. Thus, the Four Imams and the majority of scholars consider it unlawful to eat the meat slaughtered by Magians, subordinating Magians to idolaters and all other disbelievers, other than the People of the Book. Yet, some scholars considered the meat slaughtered by Magians lawful to consume, drawing similarity between them and the People of the Book. This opinion is very weak. Rather, it is invalid, while the correct opinion is that of the majority of scholars, which prohibits eating the meat slaughtered by Magians, just as eating meat slaughtered by all other polytheists. For, Magians are like polytheists and the only difference is in the command to collect Jizyah (tribute) from the Magians, while the only similarity between Magians and the People of the Book is in the enactment of collecting Jizyah (tribute) from both of them. The evidence to this ruling is Allah's

(Glorified and Exalted be He) statement in Surah Al-Ma'idah, (Made lawful to you this day are At-Tayyibât [all kinds of Halâl (lawful) foods, which Allâh has made lawful (meat of slaughtered eatable animals, milk products, fats, vegetables and fruits)]. The food (slaughtered cattle, eatable animals) of the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) is lawful to you and yours is lawful to them.)

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In this verse, Allah (Glorified be He) states that the food of the People of the Book is lawful for us and their food, meaning their slaughtered animals as was indicated by Ibn 'Abbas and other scholars. The correct denotation of the verse is that the food of other than the People of the Book, from among the disbelievers, is prohibited for us. This opinion is agreed upon by all scholars, with the exception of the weak and irregular difference with regard to the animals slaughtered by the Magians.

With this being known, if the meat sold in stores in non-Muslim countries is known to be slaughtered by the People of the Book, then it is lawful for the Muslims to consume it, as long as it is not known to be slaughtered in discordance with the Shar`y (legal) way. For, it is basically permitted according to the Qur'anic text, and therefore, this permissibility cannot be waived except by a certain reason necessitating its prohibition. If, however, the meat is slaughtered by other than the People of the Book, then it is prohibited for Muslims and they are not allowed to consume it according to the Qur'anic injunction and the consensus in opinion of the Muslim scholars. It is not sufficient to mention the Name of Allah on such meat while cleaning it or eating it. As for those who consider it lawful to consume such meat and that it is sufficient to mention the Name of Allah when eating it, they support their argument with an incident which occurred in the beginning of Islam. It should be borne in mind that the permission to eat meat and mention the Name of Allah when eating it was given about the meat served by new converts who had just left their disbelief. It is reported that some of the Companions (may Allah be pleased with all of them) asked the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), (O Messenger of Allah, some new converts to Islam bring us meat, but we don't know if they slaughtered it in the Name of Allah or not?)

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Reported by Al-Bukhari from 'Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her). Taking this into consideration, it becomes clear that there is no excuse for those who deem it lawful to consume the meat slaughtered by the disbelievers other than the People of the Book that is sold in stores, claiming that it is sufficient to mention the Name of Allah when eating it. This is because the Hadith reported by 'Aishah is related to meat slaughtered by Muslims and not by disbelievers. Therefore, there is no ambiguity in this regard. It should also be noted that what is done by a Muslim should be judged as good and acceptable, unless it is not in agreement with goodness and acceptance rules. And perhaps the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) commanded those who asked him to mention the Name of Allah while eating the meat as a precaution and that he thus meant to quench for them the whisperings of the Satan, and not to make unlawful meat lawful. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) knows best.

As for the claim that the Muslims living in non-Muslim countries suffer difficulty in getting meat slaughtered according to Shar`y way and are tired of eating chicken and other types of food, this does not give them license to eat prohibited meat. For, the rule that "necessity makes lawful that which is by default unlawful" does not apply to them according to the consensus of the Muslim scholars. Therefore, we should drive people's attention to this matter and warn them against unwarranted negligence. This is the opinion to which Allah has guided me regarding this matter that has become a general practice. I ask Allah to guide the Muslims to that which involves improvement of their religious and worldly affairs, and to fill their hearts with fear of Him, strict abstinence from prohibited things and avoidance of what opposes His Law.

6- The ruling on meat slaughtered by the People of the Scripture when the way of slaughtering is Known

Q: We find large quantities of slaughtered meat that are imported from non-Muslim countries [in the markets], is it permissible to eat such imported meat, regardless of the method of slaughtering?

A: If the meat is imported from countries of the People of the Scripture, namely Jews and Christians, it is permissible to eat of it. For, Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) permits Muslims to eat their food, including slaughtered meat. There is no objection to eating it, in case there be no reason for prohibition. However, we should not eat the meat of animals slaughtered by People of the Scripture if we know that they were killed by strangling, striking in heads with a hammer and the like, shooting (in the forehead with a special gun), electric shock or any other means. I was informed by some Du`ah (callers to Allah) that many slaughterhouses in America and Europe slaughter in a way that is not legislated. Thus, if the believer - out of caution - abstains from eating it, it would be better and safer, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, ﴾Leave what causes you doubt and turn to what does not cause you doubt.﴿ Also, he (peace be upon him) said, ﴾Whoever avoids

doubtful matters clears themselves in regard to their religion and their honor.﴿

Thus, a believer should be cautious as regards his food and drink. So, if they buy a live animal (like a sheep or chicken) and slaughter it themselves, it will be better and safer. Likewise, buying meat from butchers who are known for adopting the legislated way of slaughtering is better.

7 - The ruling on imported chicken

Q: What is the ruling on slaughtered and frozen chicken meat that is imported from abroad ? .

A: If chicken or other frozen meat is imported from countries of the People of the Book, namely Jews and Christians, then they are lawful to be consumed by Muslims. For, the food of the People of the Book is made lawful to us according to the text of the Glorious Qur'an, unless there is a reason for prohibiting it, such as its being slaughtered for other than Allah or slaughtered

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without cutting the head. However, if it is imported from the countries of the Magians, the Communists or the Socialists or other pagans, then it is prohibited to consume it.

8. Ruling on frozen chicken meat

Question: What is the ruling on eating the imported meat and the frozen chicken meat imported from non-Muslim countries, which we do not know about their method of slaughtering? Some scholars even do not support purchasing them.

Answer: If the mentioned meats are imported from the lands of the People of the Scripture (i.e. Jews and Christians), it is lawful to eat them as long as you do not know of something that proves its forbiddance. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾Made lawful to you this day are At-Tayyibât [all kinds of Halâl (lawful) foods, which Allâh has made lawful (meat of slaughtered eatable animals, milk products, fats, vegetables and fruits)]. The food (slaughtered cattle, eatable animals) of the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) is lawful to you and yours is lawful to them.﴿

The fact that some slaughterhouses in the lands of the People of the Scripture slaughter animals

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in a way that is not Islamic, this does not necessitate the forbiddance of the slaughtered meat that is imported from these lands, until you know that this specific slaughtered meat is slaughtered in a way that is not Islamic. This is because the basic principle is that the matter is lawful and safe until you know something that contradicts that.

9 - The ruling on the meat imported from communist, magian and pagan lands

Q: What is the ruling on the frozen meat and Danish frozen chicken?

A: The meat which is imported from the countries of the People of the Book, which are the Jews and the Christians, is lawful as long as it is unknown that it is not slaughtered in the prescribed manner such as strangling, beating to death or similar methods. The food of the People of the Book is lawful to us, as Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says in Surah Al-Ma'idah: ﴾Made lawful to you this day are At-Tayyibât [all kinds of Halâl (lawful) foods, which Allâh has made lawful (meat of slaughtered eatable animals, milk products, fats, vegetables and fruits)]. The food (slaughtered cattle, eatable animals) of the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) is lawful to you and yours is lawful to them.﴿ As for the meat imported from

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Communist, Socialist or Idolatrous countries, it is unlawful for us to consume. They are not of the People of the Book and do not take the ruling of Muslims.

10 - The ruling on eating meat without knowing how the animal was slaughtered

Q: Here in America frozen and refrigerated meat is sold, but we do not know who slaughtered it or how it was slaughtered. Are we allowed to eat it?

A: If the area in which this meat exists is inhabited by the People of the Book only such as the Jews and the Christians, then it is lawful to eat the meat, even without knowing how it was slaughtered. This is because their slaughtered animals are originally lawful to us, since Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾Made lawful to you this day are At-Tayyibât [all kinds of Halâl (lawful) foods, which Allâh has made lawful (meat of slaughtered eatable animals, milk products, fats, vegetables and fruits)]. The food (slaughtered cattle, eatable animals) of the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) is lawful to you and yours is lawful to them.﴿ If there are other disbelievers living in that area along with the People of the Book, then this meat is not lawful to us, because the lawful meat will not be distinguished from that which is unlawful. By the same token, if we know that those who sell such meat slaughter it in a different way from the ordained way of slaughtering such as by strangling or electric shock, then it should not be eaten by a Muslim, whether the slaughterer is a Muslim or a disbeliever. Allah (may He be Exalted and Sublime) says:

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﴾Forbidden to you (for food) are: Al-Maitah (the dead animals - cattle - beast not slaughtered), blood, the flesh of swine, and that on which Allâh's Name has not been mentioned while slaughtering, (that which has been slaughtered as a sacrifice for others than Allâh, or has been slaughtered for idols) and that which has been killed by strangling, or by a violent blow, or by a headlong fall, or by the goring of horns, and that which has been (partly) eaten by a wild animal, unless you are able to slaughter it (before its death)﴿ May Allah grant all Muslims sound understanding of the religion! Indeed, He is Hearing and Near.

11- Cheese

and other foods are originally permissible

Q: Some kinds of cheese have imported components as abomasums, which is a kind of imported cheese. What is the ruling in this regard?

A: The basic rule is the permissibility of cheese that exists in the Muslim world until we know that it contains impermissible components. Otherwise, they will be permissible because the basic rule is the permissibility of these things unless we are sure that they contain unlawful things.

12- The wisdom behind the prohibition of pork

Q: What is the wisdom behind the prohibition of pork?

A: Allah (Exalted be He) says: (Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): "I find not in that which has been revealed to me anything forbidden to be eaten by one who wishes to eat it, unless it be Maitah (a dead animal) or blood poured forth (by slaughtering or the like), or the flesh of swine (pork); for that surely is impure or impious (unlawful) meat (of an animal)) The impure things are filthy and nasty; that is the wisdom behind the prohibition of pork. The unbelievers, such as Christians and others, deem it as lawful because of their impurity. Allah's wisdom makes impure things befit the impure people; these things suit them and they like them.

13- The flesh and fat of swine are prohibited

Q: Allah (may He be Praised) says: (Forbidden to you (for food) are: Al-Maitah (the dead animals - cattle - beast not slaughtered), blood, the flesh of swine) Does it mean that things other than the flesh of swine are permitted, such as its fat? If the fat of swine is prohibited, what will be the meaning of Allah's saying: (, the flesh of swine (pork)) as he did not say and the swine?

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A: Scholars have unanimously agreed upon the prohibition of the whole swine; flesh and fat. They set as evidence the Ayah (Qur'anic verse) mentioned above and other Ayahs that bear the same meaning. They said that swine is prohibited because of its impurity. This attribute includes its flesh and fat. They said that Allah mentioned the flesh because it is the most important and other things follow it. They set also as evidence what is authentically reported in the Two Sahih (authentic) Books of Hadith (i.e. Al-Bukhari and Muslim) that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said on day of the Liberation of Makkah: ("Allah and His Messenger made illegal the trade of alcohol, dead animals, pigs and idols.") He mentioned swine without denoting the flesh. This denotes the generality of the prohibition.

14- The ruling on Lard

All praise be to Allah! Peace and blessings of Allah be upon the Messenger of Allah and upon his family, Companions and those who follow their guidance until the Day of Judgment!

I recently read a statement entitled "Swine and its fat" by `A. `A. He (may Allah grant him success!) said: "This issue occupies every Muslim who travels

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to Europe and America for any purpose. He desires to know if the food that is introduced to him is devoid of the fat of swine or not. This is because swine is used abundantly in western societies. How can he make sure that what he eats is according to Shari`ah (Islamic law) and the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him)?" He said: "What should be done in such circumstances? This question occupies many people who are forced to live in western societies for the sake of education or work. We ask this question to Shaykh `Abdul `Aziz ibn `Abdullah ibn Baz, Chairman of the Departments of Scholarly Research, Ifta', Daw`ah, and Guidance, in order to relieve many of our sons who are sent there. They have many questions concerning this issue. Moreover, some of them considered that such a state is a necessity. They argue that the legal rule states that necessities permit what is prohibited or this matter prohibited by Shari`ah. Is there any other solution for this problem other than the rule of necessity?"

I thank the writer for paying attention to this issue and trying to find solutions for that problem. I would like to answer his question in a brief statement. I ask Allah to make it a source of benefit for people.

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Firstly: There is no doubt that a student who is sent abroad faces many problems that relate to food, drink, going in and out and performing acts of worship that Allah ordains upon them. Moreover, this young man is surrounded with dangerous problems as he is exposed to temptations, callers of misguidance and impudence and the followers of Western and Oriental organizations. There is nothing that prevents the occurrence of these things except Allah. Therefore, the Muslim student should not leave his country and travel to another country for the sake of studying. By doing so, he exposes himself to great dangers and temptations.

But if the state has to teach some of its citizens a special field of knowledge that they do not have at their homes or at any other Muslim state, they will be permitted to choose wise people who have knowledge and commitment to the teachings of Islam. Those people should receive these sciences at its places with caution, care and reckoning with oneself. After finishing their studies, they should return immediately to their homes.

Secondly: Allah is all knowledgeable with the affairs of His servants and what brings them benefit and what causes them harm. He (may He be Praised) revealed to His servant and Messenger Muhammad (peace be upon him) the message of Islam that brought all goodness and warned against all that is evil. Allah (Exalted be He) forbids all that is prohibited because of the harms that they contain whether it is known to servants or not. One of these prohibitions is the flesh of the

swine. This kind of prohibition is proved by Qur'an,

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Sunnah and consensus of Muslim scholars. Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾He has forbidden you only the Maitah (dead animals), and blood, and the flesh of swine﴿ Allah (Exalted be He) also says: ﴾Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): "I find not in that which has been revealed to me anything forbidden to be eaten by one who wishes to eat it, unless it be Maitah (a dead animal) or blood poured forth (by slaughtering or the like), or the flesh of swine (pork)﴿ It is also reported in the agreed upon Hadith (reported by Al-Bukhari and Muslim) : ﴾"That Allah and His Messenger made illegal the trade of alcohol, dead animals, pigs and idols."﴿ The Qur'an and Sunnah confirmed the prohibition of the flesh of swine. Scholars (may Allah be merciful with them) have unanimously agreed upon this. Some scholars said: "As for the swine, the whole nation agreed upon prohibiting all its parts." Allah has prohibited filthy things because of the harms they include regardless of whether these harms are known to people or not. Moreover, the wisdom behind the prohibition of certain things may be known to some people or not. The wisdom behind the prohibition of the flesh of swine is what it contains of filthy things that are accompanied by harms and moral and material diseases. Therefore, its diseases are filthy and impure things. It also causes great harms in all regions, especially in hot areas. Eating its flesh brings fatal tapeworm. It is said also that it has bad effects upon chastity and jealousness. This is proven also by the status of the people in the countries that permit eating it. Modern medicine has reached

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many facts that confirm the suffering of those who eat the flesh of swine from many incurable diseases. Modern medicine has achieved advanced steps in diagnosing the harms of eating the flesh of swine. Moreover, the diseases that were not discovered yet may be many times as much.

Thirdly: Eating from what is lawful has great effect on the purity of the heart and accepting one's Du`a' (supplication) and `Ibadah (worship). Eating what is prohibited prevents accepting it. Allah (Exalted be He) says about the Jews: ﴾Those are the ones whose hearts Allâh does not want to purify (from disbelief and hypocrisy); for them there is a disgrace in this world, and in the Hereafter a great torment.﴿ ﴾(They like to) listen to falsehood, to devour anything forbidden.﴿ Allah purifies the heart and accepts the supplication of he who is attributed with these characteristics. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾"O people, Allah is Good and He, therefore, accepts only that which is good. And Allah commanded the believers as He commanded the Messengers by saying: ﴾O (you) Messengers! Eat of the Tayyibât [all kinds of Halâl foods which Allâh has made lawful (meat of slaughtered eatable animals, milk products, fats, vegetables, fruits, etc.] and do righteous deeds. Verily! I am Well-Acquainted with what you do.﴿ And He said: ﴾O you who believe (in the Oneness of Allâh - Islâmic Monotheism)! Eat of the lawful things that We have provided you with﴿ He then made a mention of a person who travels widely, his hair dishevelled and covered with dust. He lifts his hand towards the sky (and thus makes the supplication):" O Lord,O Lord,"

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whereas his diet is unlawful, his drink is unlawful, and his clothes are unlawful and his nourishment is unlawful. How can then his supplication be accepted?"﴿

Fourthly: If we realize the facts mentioned above, we will know that it is incumbent upon every Muslim to fear Allah (may He be Praised) and give up what is prohibited. Moreover, one should not

reside in a place where he can not worship Allah or abide by the rulings of His Shari`ah and then ask scholars about a solution to this problem. The problem can be solved when the teachings of Islam are followed in all areas and aspects of life. Applying the teachings of Islam in certain aspects and neglecting them in other ones will bring not benefit.

Fifthly: The student who is sent abroad is not permitted to eat from the flesh of the swine. As for the other solutions offered by the writer of this message, they spring from fearing Allah. Allah (may He be Praised) says: ﴾And whosoever fears Allâh and keeps his duty to Him, He will make a way for him to get out (from every difficulty).﴿ ﴾And He will provide him from (sources) he never could imagine.﴿ A person who is present can see things which a person who is absent can not see. Fats are very cheap in Muslim countries. A person who is sent abroad can take with him what he needs of these fats or it

may be sent to him. Moreover, the envoys can prepare for themselves suitable foods and drinks that are legally permitted as fish and the like. They can also slaughter for themselves. What they find of hardship in this regard should be shouldered for the sake of Allah in order to avoid what is prohibited.

At the end, I repeat my thanks to our brother `Isam `Abd Al-Badi` who brought attention to this problem. I ask Allah to grant all Muslims success in obeying their Lord, following His Shari`ah, working according to rulings and being cautious against the conspiracies of His enemies. He is All-Hearing and All-Near. He (may He be Praised) is the One who guides to the straight path. Peace and blessings of Allah be upon His servant and Messenger Muhammad and upon all his family and Companions!

General Chairman

of the Departments of Scholarly Research and Ifta'

`Abdul `Aziz ibn `Abdullah ibn Baz

15 - The slaughtered animals of the Pagans, Socialists and Atheists are prohibited

From 'Abdul 'Aziz ibn 'Abdullah ibn Baz to his Excellency, dear honored brother, the Minister of Commerce, may Allah grant him success!

As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh (May Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you!)

Dear beloved, a few days ago we received information from many brothers that the stores of Madinah contain some chicken meat imported by the Kingdom from other countries on which it is written Bulgaria and Yugoslavia. It is not unclear to your Excellency that Bulgaria and Yugoslavia are socialist countries and the meat slaughtered by the socialists are unlawful for Muslims to eat, just like the slaughtered animals of the Magi and the idol worshippers; rather, the slaughtered animals of the socialists are worse in unlawfulness than those of the Magi, because of their severe disbelief by being atheists and by their denial of the existence of the Inventor (may He be Exalted and Sublime), His Messenger (peace be upon him) and many other aspects of their disbelief. Even if they mention the Name of Allah while slaughtering or slaughter in accordance with the Islamic way, this, according to the consensus of opinion of the Muslim scholars, does not change the unlawfulness of their sacrifices. Therefore, I request your Excellency to direct the specialized agencies

to stop the import of their meat to protect Muslims from eating prohibited meat. Allah (Exalted be He) only made the slaughtered animals of the disbelievers from the People of the Book permissible; i.e. the Jews and the Christians, as long as we do not know that they slaughtered them in a way that renders it unlawful such as strangling them and other prohibited methods of slaughtering. Allah (may He be Exalted and Sublime) says: ﴾Made lawful to you this day are At-Tayyibât [all kinds of Halâl (lawful) foods, which Allâh has made lawful (meat of slaughtered eatable animals, milk products, fats, vegetables and fruits)]. The food (slaughtered cattle, eatable animals) of the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) is lawful to you and yours is lawful to them.﴿ The food of the People of the Book refers to their slaughtered animals as stated by Ibn 'Abbas (May Allah be pleased with him and his father) and other scholars. I ask Allah to guide your Excellency to every kind of goodness, to show you the right way and to protect His Shari'ah (Islamic Law) through your efforts. Indeed, He is Gracious and Generous. As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh.

Vice-President of the Islamic University

16. Ruling on

eating the meat imported from idolatrous countries

Question: Is it permissible to eat the meat imported from countries, in which the predominant religion is not Islam, Christianity or Judaism, like India, Japan, China or any other country?

Answer: If the meat was imported from idolatrous or communist countries, it is prohibited to be eaten. This is because their slaughtered meat is prohibited, as they are not among the People of the Scriptures (i.e. Jews and Christians). Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says, ﴾Made lawful to you this day are At-Tayyibât [all kinds of Halâl (lawful) foods, which Allâh has made lawful (meat of slaughtered eatable animals, milk products, fats, vegetables and fruits)]. The food (slaughtered cattle, eatable animals) of the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) is lawful to you and yours is lawful to them.﴿

However, if a Muslim knows that the meat killed by the People of the Scripture is slaughtered in a way that is not legislated such as strangling or giving an electric shock, it is prohibited to be eaten; as Allah (Exalted be He) says, ﴾Forbidden to you (for food) are: Al-Maitah (the dead animals - cattle - beast not slaughtered), blood, the flesh of swine, and that on which Allâh's Name has not been mentioned while slaughtering, (that which has been slaughtered as a sacrifice for others than Allâh, or has been slaughtered for idols) and that which has been killed by strangling, or by a violent blow, or by a headlong fall, or by the goring of horns, and that which has been (partly) eaten by a wild animal, unless you are able to slaughter it (before its death)﴿

17- Animals slaughtered by non-Muslims other than the people of the Book

Q: I am a Somali student studying in China and face many difficulties in finding proper food, particularly meat products.

Before I come to China, I heard that a Muslim is not permitted to eat the animals that atheists slaughter. There is a cafeteria serving meat to Muslim students in the University, but I am not certain if the animals were slaughtered in an Islamic manner. However, my colleagues are not in doubt and eat this meat. So, are they right or they are eating unlawful meat?

A- It is impermissible for Muslims to eat the slaughtered animals of the Kafirs (disbelievers) except that of the People of the Book i.e. the Jews and the Christians. The ruling applies to all Kafirs such as the magi, the pagans, the communists, and others. Also, a Muslim is not permitted to eat soup or anything that is mixed with their slaughtered animals, because Allah (may He be Praised) does not make the food of the Kafirs lawful to us except the food of the People of the Book.

Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴿Made lawful to you this day are At-Tayyibât [all kinds of Halâl (lawful) foods, which Allâh has made lawful (meat of slaughtered eatable animals, milk products, fats, vegetables and fruits)]. The food (slaughtered cattle, eatable animals) of the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) is lawful to you and yours is lawful to them.﴾ Surah (Qur'anic chapter) Al-Ma'idah. The food of the People of the Book refers to their slaughtered animals, as stated by Ibn `Abbas and others. As for fruits and the like, there is no blame on a Muslim to eat them, since they are not included in the unlawful food. In addition, Muslims' food is lawful to both Muslims and non-Muslims so long as those who cooked the food are true Muslims, worshipping none but Allah and calling with Him no prophet, pious man, a dead person or anything that the Kafirs worship.

18 - Ruling on eating the meat of hyenas

Q: Some brothers consider it lawful to eat the meat of hyena and say that your Excellency permitted doing so. Please provide us with a beneficial answer regarding this subject. May Allah reward you with the best reward!

A: The Prophet (peace be upon him) said about the hyena: ﴾It is a game (i.e. lawful to be hunted).﴿ Therefore, according to the text of the sound and authentic Hadith of the Prophet (peace be upon him), the hyena is a hunted animal

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and Allah (Exalted be He) has wisdom behind making it lawful. Moreover, those who are familiar with its meat say that in its meat there are many benefits, which cure and protect from many diseases. The point is that the meat of the hyena is lawful. Thus, if one slaughters and cleans it, and removes what is inside its belly and cooks it, it will be lawful like other game.

19- The ruling on eating porcupine

Q: What is the ruling on eating porcupine?

A: Scholars (may Allah be pleased with them) have disagreed about its ruling; some permitted it while others prohibited it. However, the more authentic of the two opinions is that it is Halal (lawful), because the original ruling concerning eating animals is lawfulness, and only things that are mentioned in Shari`ah (Islamic law) are prohibited. There is nothing in the Shari`ah that indicates the prohibition of this animal. In addition, it is a herbivore like rabbits and deer, not a carnivore, so there is no reason for prohibiting it. The mentioned animal is a kind of hedgehog with a coat of sharp spines. Ibn `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) was asked about eating hedgehogs, so he recited Allah's saying (Exalted be He), ﴾Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): "I find not in that which has been revealed to me anything forbidden to be eaten by one who wishes to eat it, unless it be Maitah (a dead animal) or blood poured forth (by slaughtering or the like), or the flesh of swine (pork)﴿

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An old man said, Abu Hurayrah narrated that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, ﴾It is one of the noxious animals.﴿ Ibn `Umar said, "If the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) had said this, it is true, then."

This indicates that he (may Allah be pleased with him) had no idea whether the Messenger of Allah had said anything about a hedgehog. It is also clear that he did not believe the mentioned old man. This Hadith was ranked as Da`if (weak) by Al-Bayhaqy and other scholars due to anonymity of this man. Thus, it is concluded that its lawfulness is true and its prohibition is a weak opinion. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) knows best.

20 - Ruling on eating the meat of dead animals

Q: A questioner asks about the permissibility of eating the meat of dead animals in an desolate desert, when a person exhausted his food since a long period but he has enough water to enable him to reach inhabited areas.

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A: If one is forced under the compulsion of necessity to eat that meat and fears death if he does not eat it, then it is allowed for him to eat that meat, because Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾Forbidden to you (for food) are: Al-Maitah (the dead animals - cattle - beast not slaughtered), blood, the flesh of swine, and that on which Allâh's Name has not been mentioned while slaughtering, (that which has been slaughtered as a sacrifice for others than Allâh, or has been slaughtered for idols) and that which has been killed by strangling, or by a violent blow, or by a headlong fall, or by the goring of horns - and that which has been (partly) eaten by a wild animal - unless you are able to slaughter it (before its death) - and that which is sacrificed (slaughtered) on An-Nusub (stone-altars). (Forbidden) also is to use arrows seeking luck or decision; (all) that is Fisqun (disobedience of Allâh and sin). This day, those who disbelieved have given up all hope of your religion; so fear them not, but fear Me. This day, I have perfected your religion for you, completed My Favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islâm as your religion. But as for him who is forced by severe hunger, with no inclination to sin (such can eat these above mentioned meats), then surely, Allâh is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.﴿

21 - Ruling eating with non-Muslims

Q: Is it unlawful for a Muslim to eat or drink with a Christian or another disbeliever? If it is unlawful, then what can we say about Allah (Exalted be He) saying: (The food (slaughtered cattle, eatable animals) of the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) is lawful to you and yours is lawful to them.) **?**

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A: It is lawful to eat with a disbeliever when necessary or when done for a legitimate benefit. However, one should not befriend them and eat with them, entertain them or laugh with them for no legitimate reason or benefit. Nevertheless, there is no harm if there is a need for doing so such as eating with guests, inviting them to the religion of Allah and guiding them to the truth or for any other legitimate reasons.

The permissibility of the food of the People of the Book for us does not warrant befriending and entertaining them as it does not entail sharing their food and drink without a legitimate need or benefit. May Allah grant us success!

22- Ruling on eating with somebody who does not offer Salah

Q: Is it permissible to eat with a person who does not offer Salah (Prayer)?

A: There is no harm in this when necessary, for the Prophet (peace be upon him) ate with the Jews on their table but, in the meantime, one should resent, oppose and disavow them for the sake of Allah.

23- Ruling on grease on hands and utensils

Q: Is it permissible for a man to fix a sewer to drain water of washing utensils and washing hands after having food?

A: There is nothing wrong with fixing a sewer to drain water whether for washing utensils or hands, because the grease left on hands and dishes after eating is not considered food. However, it is not permissible to get rid of bread, meat, and different types of fruit by throwing them in the sewers; they should be given to the needy or be placed in a clean place to enable animals or birds to eat them. It is not permissible to throw the food in the garbage, dirty places or on roads, as this shows disrespect and harm those who use the roads.

24- Ruling on throwing leftover food in the garbage and spreading newspapers to eat on

Q 1: Is it permissible to spread newspapers and put food on them. If it is not allowed, what should we do after reading them?

Q 2: As for leftover food, some people put it in boxes, etc., and then put it out on the street for animals to eat; however, trash collectors put it in garbage cans with other trash. The question is: Is it permissible to throw out the food with other trash?

A 1: It is not allowed to spread the newspapers and eat on them or wrap things in them or humiliating them by any means if they contain some Ayahs (Qur'anic verse) or any mention of Allah (Exalted be He). If the case is as mentioned, then it is obligatory to keep them in a proper place, burn them, or bury them in clean earth.

A 2: If there are poor people who are in need of this food, then one must give it to them; otherwise, it should be put in a place far away from abuse so that animals can eat it. If this is not possible, then it should be kept in boxes or plastic bags or other containers and the municipalities should obligate the trash collectors to put it in clean places so that animals will eat it or some people will take it for their animals. This is done in order to keep the food away from being abused and wasted.

25 - Ruling on smoking and using hookah ?

Q: What is the ruling on smoking and using hookah?

A: Smoking and using hookah are prohibited acts, because they contain evil and many harms. Allah (may He be Exalted and Sublime) made lawful for His servants all kinds of lawful and good things and made unlawful to them all kinds of evil things, as He (may He be Exalted and Sublime) says to His Prophet (peace be upon him): ﴾They ask you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) what is lawful for them (as food). Say: "Lawful unto you are At-Tayyibât [all kind of Halâl (lawful-good) foods which Allâh has made lawful (meat of slaughtered eatable animals, milk products, fats, vegetables and fruits)].﴿ He (may He be Exalted and Sublime) also says with regard to the description of His Prophet (peace be upon him): ﴾he allows them as lawful At-Tayyibât (i.e. all good and lawful as regards things, deeds, beliefs, persons, foods), and prohibits them as unlawful Al-Khabâ'ith (i.e. all evil and unlawful as regards things, deeds, beliefs, persons and foods)﴿

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No type of smoking is from the lawful-good things, but they are from the evil things due to their much harm. They are not from the lawful-good things which Allah (Exalted be He) permitted, and therefore, they should be abandoned and one should beware of approaching them and should strive against his evil soul to avoid these evil things, because the soul persist in evil, except those relieved by Allah's Mercy. It is the duty of the believer to strive against himself to set aside whatever harms him from these and other evil things.

26 - Some harmful effects of smoking

Q: What is the legal grounds of those who judge smoking as unlawful in the Shari`ah of Allah (Exalted be He)?

A: They argue that smoking is harmful and may be narcotic and intoxicant. It is originally harmful and the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾There should be neither harming nor reciprocating harm.﴿ This means that anything which causes harm to a person in

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his religion or in his life is prohibited whether it is poison, smoking, or any other harmful thing. This prohibition is due to Allah's (may He be Exalted and Sublime) saying: ﴾and do not throw yourselves into destruction (by not spending your wealth in the Cause of Allâh)﴿ The Prophet (may Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon him) also says: ﴾There should be neither harming nor reciprocating harm﴿ For these reasons, the erudite scholars have considered smoking prohibited due to the grievous harms known to the smoker himself, to the physicians and to all those who mix with the smokers. It is to be noted that smoking may cause sudden death and many other diseases. It also causes frequent coughing and chronic diseases. We received information about all these harms from uncountable numbers of those who were addicted to smoking and those who used hookah and other types of smoking. Therefore, all types of smoking are harmful and should be banned and physicians should give advice to those who are addicted to smoking to stop it. Both physicians and teachers should stay away from it, since they are examples to others.

27. Prohibition of smoking and exposing its harms

All Praise is due to Allah alone. May the Peace and Blessing of Allah be upon His Messenger and upon all his family and Companions.

I was asked by some brothers about the ruling on smoking cigarettes and the validity of the Imamah (leading Muslims in the prayer) of a person who does so publicly, while mentioning that this evil has become prevalent and has afflicted many people.

Answer: The Shar`i (legal) evidences indicate that smoking cigarettes is prohibited and that is due to its great harm and danger, for Allah has not sanctioned anything from food and drink except that which is good and beneficial. As for the things that cause detriment to the people's religion or worldly life, or change their own selves, Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) prohibited them; as He is more Merciful to His servants than they are to themselves. He is the All-Wise and All-Knowing in His speech, action, legislation and ordainments. He does not prohibit anything in vain, nor does He order His Servants to do something in which there is no benefit, for He (Exalted be He) is the Wisest of Judges and the Most Merciful. He is the All-Knowing about what is proper for His servants and what benefits them in this life and the Hereafter, as He says, ﴾Certainly your Lord is All-Wise, All-Knowing.﴿ Also,

He (Glorified and Exalted be He) says, ﴾And Allâh is Ever All-Knower, All-Wise.﴿ There are many other verses that indicate the same meaning. As for the Qur'anic indications on the prohibition of smoking cigarettes, Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says in Surah Al-Ma'idah, ﴾They ask you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) what is lawful for them (as food). Say: "Lawful unto you are At-Tayyibât [all kind of Halâl (lawful-good) foods which Allâh has made lawful (meat of slaughtered eatable animals, milk products, fats, vegetables and fruits)].﴿ Describing our Prophet Muhammad

(peace be upon him), He (Exalted be He) says in surah Al-A`raf: ﴿he commands them for Al-Ma'rûf (i.e. Islâmic Monotheism and all that Islâm has ordained); and forbids them from Al-Munkar (i.e. disbelief, polytheism of all kinds, and all that Islâm has forbidden); he allows them as lawful At-Tayyibât (i.e. all good and lawful as regards things, deeds, beliefs, persons, foods), and prohibits them as unlawful Al-Khabâ'ith (i.e. all evil and unlawful as regards things, deeds, beliefs, persons and foods)﴾ Allah (Exalted be He) clarifies in these two noble verses that He has not permitted anything for His servants except things that are good and pure, which are the beneficial foods and drinks. As for the foods and drinks that cause harm - like those that intoxicate, narcotize, or any other food or drink that is harmful to religion, body or mind, they are prohibited. Physicians and other experts are in agreement that cigarettes are extremely harmful to the health. They have also mentioned that it is a case of a wide array of diseases, amongst them cancer and cardiac arrest. If this is truly the case, then there should be no doubt in the prohibition of anything that has similar consequences, and it becomes an obligation to be cautious of it. The intelligent people should not be de deceived by the scores of people who smoke, for verily Allah says in His Clear Book, ﴿And if you obey most of those on the earth, they will mislead you far away from Allâh's Path. They follow nothing but conjectures, and they do nothing but lie.﴾

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Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) also says: ﴿Or do you think that most of them hear or understand? They are only like cattle - nay, they are even farther astray from the Path (i.e. even worse than cattle).﴾ As for the validity of the Imamah of the smoker or any other disobedient person, it is not befitting that their likes be taken as an Imam (in prayer). Rather, it is legislated that one choose for that duty a person who is known for their uprightness and piousness, for the matter of Imamah is indeed a great one. For this reason, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, ﴿The one who is most versed in Allah's Book should act as Imam for the people; if they are equally versed in reciting it, then the one who is most knowledgeable in Sunnah. Again, if they are equal regarding the Sunnah, the earliest immigrant; if they emigrated at the same time, then the earliest one to embrace Islam.﴾

This Hadith was reported by Muslim in his Sahih. It is mentioned in the two Sahihs that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said to Malik ibn Al-Huwayrith and his Companions, ﴿When the time for prayer is due, one of you should announce Adhan (call for prayer) and the oldest among you should lead prayers.﴾ However, scholars (may Allah have mercy upon them) differed regarding the validity of the Imamah of the evildoer. Some scholars maintain that the prayer performed behind him is not valid, due to the weakness of his religion and the shortcoming of his faith. However, others state that it is valid,

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giving the reason that if the prayer is valid in regards to his own self, it necessitates that it also be valid for those following him. Also, many Companions prayed behind governors and rulers who were known for their oppression and sinfulness. Ibn `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) prayed behind Al-Hajjaj, who was notorious for being of the most wrongful people. This is the preponderant opinion, i.e. the validity of the Imamah of a person who smokes and the prayer of those following him. However, it should be known that it is not befitting that his likes be taken as an Imam, while there are others from the righteous people that can be chosen instead. This reply is indeed concise, as we only intended to mention the principle ruling on these two matters and to clarify some of the evidences in this regard. Scholars have clarified the ruling concerning these two matters. Hence, whoever wants elucidation in this subject will surely find it. We ask Allah to rectify the affairs of the Muslims and guide them all to be upright in religion and be wary of whatever opposes it. Verily, He is

the Most Generous. May the Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon our Prophet Muhammad, and upon his family and Companions.

General Chairman

of the Departments of Scientific Research, Ifta', Da`wah and Guidance

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28 - Ruling on accompanying smokers

Q: Praise be to Allah, I am doing my best to keep performing the Salah (prayers) in congregation in the Masjid (mosque), and I have cleared my house from VCRs and burnt all the videos and pictures I had before. I also recorded Islamic material on the song tapes that I have. I also let my beard grow and shortened my garment following the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). There is only one thing that troubles me, namely, smoking. I tried and I am still trying to stop it, but I could not stop it until now. What can I do? May Allah reward you with the best reward! What is your advice to me? Please, pray Allah for me to stop it.

A: Praise be to Allah, Who has guided you to know the truth, adhere to it, and leave what opposes it. We ask Allah (Exalted be He) to keep you firm on the truth and grant you sound understanding of the religion.

You should stop smoking and beware of it, as it has many harmful effects. Once you have a good intention to set it aside and you stay away from accompanying the smokers, Allah (Exalted be He) will help you abandon it and save you from its evils. We advise you to have sincere and firm determination in that along with beseeching Allah (Exalted be He) during prostrations and other times for help.

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You should also stay away from sitting with those who smoke. Have glad tidings of goodness and good outcome and always remember Allah's (may He be Exalted and Sublime) saying: ﴾Invoke Me, [i.e. believe in My Oneness (Islâmic Monotheism) and ask Me for anything] I will respond to your (invocation).﴿ Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) also says: ﴾and whosoever fears Allâh and keeps his duty to Him, He will make his matter easy for him.﴿ May Allah grant you success and help you set aside smoking and affirm you in truth, indeed, He is Hearing and Near.

29 - Ruling on cigarettes and water pipes

Q: Please answer my question, may Allah protect you from all kinds of evils. What is the ruling on smoking and what is your advice to those who disturb the environments of the Islamic societies with the different types of cigarettes and water pipes? May Allah safeguard you against all evils! .

A: All types of smoking are prohibited, because they contain much harm. Therefore, it is the duty of every Muslim to abandon smoking, to be cautious against it, and to stay away from sitting and mixing with those who smoke. May Allah grant us success!

30 - All types of smoking are prohibited

Q: What is ruling on smoking? What is your advice to those who disturb the environment of Islamic societies with the different types of cigarettes and water pipes? May Allah safeguard you!

A: All types of smoking are prohibited, because they contain many kinds of harm. It is the duty of every Muslim to abandon smoking, to beware of it and to stay away from sitting and mixing with those who smoke. May Allah grant us success!

31- Ruling on smoking and trading in tobacco

Q: What is the ruling on smoking? Is it Haram (prohibited) or Makruh (reprehensible)? What is the ruling on selling and trading in tobacco?

A: Smoking is Haram, since it is evil and involves much harm. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) makes good foods and drinks Halal (lawful) for His Servants and makes evil things unlawful for them.

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Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says, ﴾They ask you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) what is lawful for them (as food). Say: "Lawful unto you are At-Tayyibât [all kind of Halâl (lawful-good) foods which Allâh has made lawful (meat of slaughtered eatable animals, milk products, fats, vegetables and fruits)].﴿ Describing His Prophet (peace be upon him) in Surah Al-A`raf, Allah (Glorified be He) says, ﴾he commands them for Al-Ma'rûf (i.e. Islâmic Monotheism and all that Islâm has ordained); and forbids them from Al-Munkar (i.e. disbelief, polytheism of all kinds, and all that Islâm has forbidden); he allows them as lawful At-Tayyibât (i.e. all good and lawful as regards things, deeds, beliefs, persons, foods), and prohibits them as unlawful Al-Khabâ'ith (i.e. all evil and unlawful as regards things, deeds, beliefs, persons and foods)﴿ All kinds of tobacco and intoxicants are not good or lawful; they are rather bad and unlawful. It is impermissible to smoke, sell, or trade in tobacco due to its serious harms and dangerous consequences. It is obligatory upon whoever smokes or trades in tobacco to hasten to perform Tawbah (repentance to Allah), return to Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He), regret the past sins and determine not to do that again. Whosoever repents sincerely, Allah will accept their Tawbah, according to Allah's saying, ﴾And all of you beg Allâh to forgive you all, O believers, that you may be successful﴿ Allah (Glorified be He) also says: ﴾And verily, I am indeed forgiving to him who repents, believes (in My Oneness, and associates none in worship with Me) and does righteous good deeds, and then remains constant in doing them, (till his death).﴿ The Prophet (may Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon him) also says: ﴾Tawbah wipes out all

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previous misdeeds.﴿ He (peace be upon him) also said, ﴾A person who performs Tawbah from sins is like the one who has not committed a sin before.﴿

May Allah set right the affairs of the Muslims and protect them from all what opposes His Shari`ah (Islamic Law)! He is All-Hearer and Responsive.

32 - Ruling on using water pipes and smoking

Q: What is the ruling on using water pipes? Does it take the same ruling of smoking? Are water pipes and smoking classified under prohibited drugs?

A: Using water pipes and smoking, including all their types, are prohibited because of the harmful effects they incur as confirmed by the well-versed physicians. Allah has prohibited Muslims to harmful matters. It is thus an obligation upon those who use water pipes and those who smoke to stop them and beware of them. Addressing His Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says in Surah Al-Ma'idah: ﴾ They ask you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) what is lawful for them (as food). Say: "Lawful unto you are At-Tayyibât [all kind of Halâl (lawful-good) foods which Allâh has made lawful (meat of slaughtered eatable animals, milk products, fats, vegetables and fruits)].﴿ Describing His Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) also says in Surah Al-A`raf: ﴾he allows them as lawful At-Tayyibât (i.e. all good and lawful as regards things, deeds, beliefs, persons, foods), and prohibits them as unlawful Al-Khabâ'ith (i.e. all evil and unlawful as regards things, deeds, beliefs, persons and foods)﴿

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It is noteworthy that all types of smoking and water pipes are classified under evil things, which harm man and thus are unlawful, according to the text of these two Ayahs (Qur'anic verses) and other Ayahs carrying the same concepts. We ask Allah to guide Muslims to that in which there is their goodness and salvation and to protect them from what harms them in this life and the Hereafter, indeed, He is the best to be asked.

33- Ruling on Qat and tobacco and ruling on befriending smokers

Q: What is the ruling on Qat (Khat: leaves and buds that are habituating stimulants when chewed or used as a tea) and cigarettes which are widespread between Muslims? What is the ruling on befriending anyone who smokes these two types or one of them? What should a person do to prevent his brother or son from smoking?

A: Qat and cigarettes are unlawful for their harmful effects and for they may anaesthetize and intoxicate the addict as indicated by smokers themselves. Scholars including

shaykh Muhammad ibn Ibrahim Al Al-Shaykh, the former Mufty of Saudi Arabia (may Allah be merciful with him), wrote books on its unlawfulness.

It is Wajib (obligatory) upon every Muslim to abandon all kinds of smoking. It is not permissible to sell or buy cigarettes or Qat for their money is unlawful and ill-gotten gains. We ask Allah to save Muslims from them!

It is not permissible to befriend anyone who smokes any kind of intoxicants, for this might lead to committing this crime. It is Wajib to befriend righteous Muslims and avoid befriending evil people. The Prophet (peace be upon him) likened ("a good companion to someone carrying musk. The musk carrier will either offer you some free of charge, or you will buy some from him, or you will gain a pleasant fragrance from him.") He (peace be upon him) also likened a bad companion to someone who blows bellows (a blacksmith); he will either burn your clothes or you will gain a repugnant smell from him. He (peace be upon him) also said, ("A man will most likely follow the religion of his friends, so be careful when choosing your friends.") It is obligatory upon a householder to punish smokers

and prevent them even if by beating, punishment, or ousting them until they repent. Allah (Glorified be He) says, (So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can) Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) also says: (and whosoever fears Allâh and keeps his duty to Him, He will make his matter easy for him.) May Allah set right the affairs of all Muslims and guide them to whatever is good for them and their families for He is the best One asked for help!

34- Qat is prohibited but not Najis

Q: Many addicts of chewing Qat (Khat: leaves and buds that are habituating stimulants when chewed or used as a tea) tend to expectorate it in a plastic bag at the time of Salah (Prayer), then chew it again afterwards. Is Qat Najis (ritually impure)? What is the ruling on one who offers Salah while keeping it in their mouth? Is it permissible for a person to delay Salah and combine them after they finish chewing it?

A: I do not know of any legal indication that it is Najis, for it is a well-known plant and the original rule for plants is their permissibility. However, using it is prohibited

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according to the most correct of the two scholarly views. It is also impermissible to delay Salah for the mentioned reason. Instead, a Muslim should offer Salah on time with the congregation in the Masjids (mosques), for the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴿Anyone who hears the call (for Prayer) but does not come, has no Salah (i.e. his individual Prayer will not count), unless he has a (lawful) excuse﴾ Related by Ibn Majah, Al-Daraqutny, and Al-Hakim with a Sahih (authentic) Isnad (chain of narrators).

When Ibn `Abbas (may Allah be pleased with them both) was asked about the excuse, he said : "Fear or illness". Using Qat is not a Shar`y (Islamically lawful) excuse; rather it is a Munkar (that which is unacceptable or disapproved of by Islamic law and Muslims of sound intellect). If the person who uses it does not offer Salah on time with the congregation in the Masjid, that will be worse sin.

It is not permissible for anyone who uses it to combine two Salahs. It is authentically reported that when the Prophet (peace be upon him) taught his companions the times of Salah and clarified their starting and ending times, he said: ﴿Salah is due between these two times.﴾ It is also authentically reported in the Sahih (authentic book of Hadith) of Muslim: ﴿That a blind man said: "O Messenger of Allah! I have no guide to lead me

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to the Masjid, can I have a concession to offer Salah at home?" The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: "Do you hear the call (i.e. for the Salah)?" He replied: "Yes" The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: "Then respond to it".﴾ According to an authentic narration by other than Muslim: He (peace be upon him) said: ﴿I do not find a concession for you﴾

These authentic Hadiths and others to the same effect show the obligation of offering Salah in congregation in the houses of Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) (i.e. in the Masjids) and the prohibition of delaying or combining them without a Shar`y excuse. My advice to those who use Qat, smoke or take drugs is to guard themselves against these things and fear Allah, because using them is an act of disobedience to Allah (Glorified be He) and His Messenger (peace be upon him). Such substances are extremely dangerous, lead to adverse consequences, and restrain from remembering Allah and observing Salah. We implore Allah to guide all Muslims to that which pleases Him and set aright the hearts and deeds of all Muslims. We also ask Him to protect them from evil companions

who hinder doing that which is good. He is Ever Generous, Most Bountiful. May Allah grant us success!

35 - Is tea considered as Khamr?

Q: Some people claim that tea is Khamr (wine), because its preparation is done through the fermentation of the green tea plants until it becomes black.

A: As far as we know, this is a baseless claim.

36- Ruling on drinking beer

Q: What is the ruling on consuming beer and similar beverages?

A: If the beer is free of intoxicating substances, there is no harm in drinking it but if its ingredients have any intoxicant elements, it is not permissible to be consumed and this applies to other intoxicants whether potable or edible. They should be avoided and it is not permissible to consume them. Allah (may He be Exalted and Glorified)

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said, ﴾O you who believe! Intoxicants (all kinds of alcoholic drinks), and gambling, and Al-Ansâb, and Al-Azlâm (arrows for seeking luck or decision) are an abomination of Shaitan's (Satan) handiwork. So avoid (strictly all) that (abomination) in order that you may be successful.﴿ ﴾Shaitân (Satan) wants only to excite enmity and hatred between you with intoxicants (alcoholic drinks) and gambling, and hinder you from the remembrance of Allâh and from As-Salât (the prayer). So, will you not then abstain?﴿ The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, ﴾Every intoxicant is Khamr and every Khamr is unlawful.﴿ (Related by Imam Muslim in his Sahih) ﴾It is authentically recorded that the Prophet (peace be upon him) cursed wine, its drinker, the one who serves it, its squeezer, the one to whom it is squeezed, its carrier, the one to whom it is carried, its seller, its buyer, and the one who consumes its price.﴿ Also, it is authentically reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, ﴾Every drink that causes intoxication is legally prohibited.﴿ It is also authentically reported that: ﴾Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) forbade every intoxicant

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and narcotic.﴿

It is necessary that all Muslims avoid all kinds of intoxicants and warn against them and if somebody takes anything of them, they have to leave it and hasten to repent to Allah of this. Allah (glory be to Him) said, ﴾And all of you beg Allâh to forgive you all, O believers, that you may be successful﴿ Allah (Glorified be He) also says: ﴾O you who believe! Turn to Allâh with sincere repentance!﴿

37- Ruling on sitting at a table where Khamr is served

Q: I study at a Japanese university that holds many meetings, seminars and parties, where Khamr (intoxicant) is served. Am I considered sinful for attending such gatherings? It may be worth mentioning that I do not drink Khamr, all praise be to Allah Alone, and I am even always keen not to sit near it.

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A: It is not permissible for you to sit with people who drink Khamr. Rather, you have to forbid them from doing so. If they conform to your advice, you may sit with them but if they refuse it, you have to leave them. Proof for the foregoing is a Hadith in which the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day, let them not sit at a table where Khamr is being served.﴿ (Related by Imam Ahmad and Al-Tirmidhy with a good Sanad (chain of narrators)). This is also because sitting with people who drink Khamr is tantamount to participating in their bad deed or being content with it while Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says inSurah (Qur'anic chapter) Al-An`am: ﴾And when you (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) see those who engage in a false conversation about Our Verses (of the Qur'ân) by mocking at them, stay away from them till they turn to another topic. And if Shaitân (Satan) causes you to forget, then after the remembrance sit not you in the company of those people who are the Zâlimûn (polytheists and wrong-doers).﴿ Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) also says: ﴾And it has already been revealed to you in the Book (this Qur'ân) that when you hear the Verses of Allâh being denied and mocked at, then sit not with them, until they engage in a talk other than that; (but if you stayed with them) certainly in that case you would be like them.﴿ SurahAl-Nisa'.May Allah grant us success!

38- What is the difference between the Khamr of this world and that of the Hereafter?

Q: We all know that Khamr is prohibited in the world, because it causes intoxication and covers the mind. Therefore, it is one of the evils of Satan. It is also the source of all evil as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said. The question is, why Khamr is Haram (prohibited) in the world and Halal (lawful) in the Hereafter?

A: The Khamr of the Hereafter is good and does not contain intoxication or harm contrary to our Khamr that intoxicates and causes harm i.e. the Khamr of the Hereafter does not have Ghawl (any kind of hurt, abdominal pain, headache, a sin) from that, nor will they suffer intoxication therefrom. It also does not cover the mind or cause harm to the body. The Khamr of the world causes harm to the mind and body. All damage which is contained in the Khamr of the world does not exist in the Khamr of the Hereafter. May Allah grant us success!

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39 - Kindness and good treatment of animals

Q: Doctor T.'A.S. from Australia raised a question about moving animals from Australia to the Middle East and was concerned about the bad conditions surrounding the shipment of these animals. We request H.E. Shaykh 'Abdul 'Aziz ibn 'Abdullah ibn Baz to answer his question. Following is the Shaykh's answer to his question .

A: From 'Abdul 'Aziz ibn 'Abdullah ibn Baz to the honorable brother T.G.'A., may Allah grant us and him guidance and success.

As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh (May Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you!)

I have reviewed your letter regarding your request to write about the subject of moving animals from your country, Australia, to the Middle East and the bad conditions to which animals are exposed during the shipping process, the conditions of the ships which carry such animals and the resulting crowdedness and other bad consequences. As we pray to Allah to guide us, you and our Muslim brothers to His straight path, we thank you for being interested in this important subject. It also gives us much pleasure to answer your question in the light of the texts of the Noble Book and the pure Sunnah reported that emphasize

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the kindness that should be observed to both eatable and non-eatable animals, in addition to a number of sound Hadiths that threat those who torture animals, whether by starving or negligence, while moving them or at any other situation.

Allah (Exalted be He) tells us about kindness to animals in general when He says: ﴾and do good. Truly, Allâh loves Al-Muhsinûn (the good-doers).﴿ Allah (Exalted be He) also says: ﴾Verily, Allâh enjoins Al-'Adl (i.e. justice and worshipping none but Allâh Alone - Islâmic Monotheism) and Al-Ihsân [i.e. to be patient in performing your duties to Allâh, totally for Allâh's sake and in accordance with the Sunnah (legal ways) of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in a perfect manner]﴿ The Prophet (may Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon him) also says in the Hadith related by Muslim and the compilers of Sunan (authors of Hadith compilations classified by jurisprudential themes) : ﴾Verily Allah has enjoined goodness upon everything; so when you kill, kill in a good way, and when you slaughter, slaughter in a good way. So every one of you should sharpen his knife and let the slaughtered animal die comfortably.﴿ In another narration, he (peace be upon him) said: ﴾Slaughter in the best manner.

Let one of you sharpen his knife and give ease to his animal (in order to reduce its pain).❳

With regard to relieving those in trouble, there is a sound and authentic Hadith stating the great reward for the one who relieves those in trouble; forgiveness of his sins and appreciation of his act. It is reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allah

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(peace be upon him) said: ❲While a man was walking, he felt very thirsty. He found a well, so he drank some water. Then, he saw a dog that was also very thirsty. The man thought, "This dog is as thirsty as me." So, he went down the well, filled his shoe with water, and gave it to the dog to drink. Allah (may He be Exalted) thanked him and forgave his sins. People asked the Prophet (peace be upon him), "Shall we be rewarded if we give water to animals?" The Prophet (peace be upon him) replied, "(Giving water to) every living soul deserves reward."❳

Abu Hurayrah also reported that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: ❲While a dog was going around a well and about to die of thirst, a prostitute from the Children of Israel saw it. Then she took her shoe off, filled it with water and quenched the thirst of the dog, and because of that act Allah forgave her sins.❳ Reported by Muslim in his Sahih. Islam also urges kindness and makes it the right of those who deserve it, and prohibits its opposite that includes injustice and transgression. Allah (Exalted be He)

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says: ❲And fight in the Way of Allâh those who fight you, but transgress not the limits.❳ Allah (Exalted be He) also says: ❲And whoever among you does wrong (i.e. sets up rivals to Allâh), We shall make him taste a great torment.❳ It is reported in the Sahih of Muslim ❲that Ibn 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him and his father) passed by a group of people who tied a chicken alive and made it a target for shooting their arrows. When they saw Ibn 'Umar, they went away from it. Then Ibn 'Umar said : Who did this? Indeed, the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) cursed those who have done this.❳ It is also reported in the Sahih of Muslim on the authority of Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) that ❲the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) forbade that animals should be tied up and made a target of i.e. confined till death.❳ In another narration, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: Do not make a living thing a target. On the authority of Ibn 'Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him and his father) ❲that the Prophet (peace be upon him) prohibited the killing of four beasts: the bee,

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the ant, the hoopoe and the shrike.❳ Reported by Abu Dawud with a good chain of transmission . It is also reported in the Sahih of Muslim that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: ❲A woman was destined to torture (in the hereafter) because of a cat which she confined until it died (of hunger); so she was sent to the fire because of it. She did not allow it to eat or drink, as it was confined, and she did not free it so that it might eat the insects of the earth.❳ It is also reported in the Sunan of Abu Dawud from Abu Waqid who said that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: ❲Whatever is cut off from an animal when it is alive is dead❳ . Al-Tirmidhy also reported [that the Prophet said] : ❲Whatever is cut off from a living being when it is alive is dead❳ .

It is also reported that Abu Mas'ud said: We were on a journey with the Messenger of Allah (peace

be upon him) and then he (peace be upon him) went to answer the call of nature. At that time we saw a Humrah (i.e. a type of sparrow) with her two chicks and we took the two chicks. Afterwards, the bird came and started spreading her wings over those beneath her. When the Prophet (peace be upon him) came, he said: ﴾Who has grieved this bird and took its chicks?

Return her chicks to it.﴿ On another occasion, he (peace be upon him) saw a valley of ants which we had burnt and he said: ﴾"Who has burnt this? We replied: We did. He said: It is not proper for anyone to punish with fire except the Lord of fire".﴿

On the authority of Ibn 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him and his father) that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: ﴾Whoever kills a sparrow or anything larger than that without just cause, Allah will hold him accountable on the Day of Judgment. He was asked: "O Messenger of Allah, what is a just cause? He replied: "That he killed it to eat, not simply to chop its head off and then throw it away."﴿ Reported by Al-Nasa'y and Al-Hakim who classed it as authentic. This Hadith means that it is necessary to stop doing such acts. This is the sheer mercy equally given to these animals and other creatures.

On the authority of Ibn 'Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him and his father) that the Prophet (peace be upon him) passed by a donkey whose face had been branded, and then he said: ﴾"May Allah curse the one who branded it."﴿ Reported by Muslim. According to another narration by Muslim: ﴾The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) prohibited striking

on the face and branding it.﴿ This includes mankind and animals.

All these texts and others contain concepts that indicate the prohibition of all types of torture of animals even of animals which the Shari'ah allows to kill such as the five evil animals and birds (the raven, the scorpion, the rat, the glede and the wilddog). It is noted that Al-Bukhary added: the serpent to the above-mentioned five animals and birds. This indicates Islam's concern about animals whether by considering what will benefit them or what will save them from harm. It is thus obligatory to put the narrations reported with regard to taking care of the animals and those reported in regard to threatening against torturing them by any means before one's eyes and pay full attention to them, particularly the type of animals mentioned in the question. This is because animals are used for food and are also property. There are also certain Islamic rulings related to them with regard to some forms of obedience and devotional acts. They are also exposed to many types of hardships while shipping them and moving them in large quantities for long distances. This might result in crowdedness that destroys the weak among them, leads to their starvation, thirst and the spread of diseases among them and many other harmful things that require quick consideration and serious study from those in charge in order to make comfortable arrangements for the means of transportation, for moving them from one place to another, providing them with food and drink, in addition to other means of ease such as ventilation,

medical treatment, separating the weak from the dangerous strong ones, and the sick from the healthy in all phases until they are sold as good as possible. The arrangements that have been mentioned can be made by the investing organizations, individuals and importing and exporting companies. All these things require costs which the owners of these companies and those in charge of these animals should spend with good conduct.

The modern methods of slaughtering eatable animals in most foreign countries and the way the animals are prepared for slaughter cause grief and should be denied. Many animals are tortured by the use of electric shocks in the head to make it lose consciousness and then it is passed onto hooks which hold it upside down while it is still alive. Other forms of torture are where the animal is put onto an electric belt till it reaches the place of slaughtering in slaughterhouse or canning factory. Other forms of abuse include plucking out the feathers of chickens and birds while they are still alive or dipping them in very hot water when they are alive or exposing them to very hot steam in order to remove the feathers claiming that this method is cost effective as known about other well-known methods of slaughtering. It is noted that such methods are considered torture which clearly contradicts the command to be kind to animals and the emphasis that the tolerant Islamic Shari'ah imposes. Every act that opposes the rulings of the Shari'ah is considered transgression and injustice for which the perpetrator will be held accountable, because of what has been stated

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and due to the sound and authentic Hadith in which the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴿Allah will retaliate for a hornless sheep by punishing the horned sheep which broke its horns.﴾ If this is the punishment of an animal, which does not understand and harms another animal, what about the humans who know about injustice and its evil results?

In the light of the Islamic texts and their implications and concepts, Muslim jurists dedicated certain chapters discussing the obligatory and recommended acts that should be observed and the prohibited and reprehensible acts that should be avoided when treating with animals in general and what is related to the slaughtering of eatable animals in particular. The following are some aspects related to kindness to animals while slaughtering them. It is recommended to do the following:

1 - Offering water to animals which will be slaughtered in accordance with the previously-mentioned Hadith in which the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴿Verily, Allah has enjoined goodness to everything.﴾

2 - The tool used for slaughtering should be sharpened and in a good condition and the person doing this task should put it on the place of slaughtering, the upper part of the chest of the camel and on the throat of other animals which makes it easier and quicker to slaughter.

3 - If possible, camels should be slaughtered while standing up, tying the left leg while facing the Qiblah.

4 - Any animal other than the camel should be slaughtered lying down on its left side, if this is

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easy for the person who should place his leg on the right side of its neck without tying the front or back legs and without bending anything from it or breaking any part of its body before it dies and stops moving. It is also reprehensible to cut off its neck or slaughter it while other animals are watching.

These recommendations should be observed while slaughtering the animal out of mercy and kindness. Opposite and unkind behavior that opposes these instructions, such as dragging the animal from its legs to be slaughtered, is reprehensible. It is reported from Abdur-Razzaq in a Mawquf Hadith that Ibn 'Umar saw a man dragging a goat from its legs to slaughter it. Ibn 'Umar said to him: Woe to you, lead it to death in a nice way.

It is also reprehensible to sharpen the knife in front of the animal at the time of slaughtering, because it is authentically reported in the Musnad of Imam Ahmad from Ibn 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him and with his father) that ﴿The Prophet (peace be upon him) ordered that the blade

should be sharpened and be hidden from the animal.) It is also authentically reported in Al-Mu'jam Al-Kabir and Al-Mu'jam Al-Awsat of At-Tabaraniy through a good chain of transmitters from 'Abdullah ibn 'Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him and his father) who said that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) passed by a man who was putting his leg on the face of a goat while he was sharpening his blade and the goat was looking at him while he was doing that. Then he (peace be upon him) said: (You should have done this before. Do you want to slaughter it two times?)

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As for animals which are difficult to slaughter such as those that are hunted, wild animals or stray camels which are difficult to catch, it is sufficient to shoot an arrow or something similar, not a bone or nail, at the animal that makes it bleed, after mentioning the Name of Allah on it. If that animal is killed by the arrow or whatever is used, then it is allowed to eat it, because killing it in this way is similar to killing a slaughtered animal, unless it dies due to other causes that are different from the arrow or due to the arrow and another thing.

We mentioned this to benefit you, keeping in mind that these are not all the sound and authentic reports narrated on the treatment of different kinds of animals. It is noteworthy that Islam is the religion of mercy, the legislation of kindness, the perfect code of life and the path leading to Allah (Exalted be He) and to the Abode of His Honor. Therefore, it is an obligation to invite people to it, to judge in accordance with its teachings and regulations, to endeavor to spread it among those who do not know it and to remind Muslims in general of any rulings or objectives they might be ignoring and this should be done to seek the Pleasure of Allah. The objectives of the Islamic legislation are very fair and wise, and thus there is no prohibition to make use of all useful animals, which is opposite to the Buddhists, and there is no absolute permissibility of all harmful animals, which is opposite to those who devour pigs, beasts of prey, and the like. There is no injustice or violation of the sanctity of every being; soul, property, or honor.

Thus, we thank Allah (Exalted be He) for His blessings, the greatest of which is the blessing of Islam. We supplicate earnestly Allah to make His religion victorious, to raise His Word high, and not to make us, because of our shortcomings, a trial

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for the disbelievers. May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, the conveyer of the clear message, upon his family, his companions and those who follow his guidance until the Day of Judgment. As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh (May Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you!)

40 - The sacrifices of any Muslim are lawful

Q: What is the ruling on the sacrifice of a non-Sunni Muslim whom Allah later guided to the Sunni Islam?

A: The sacrifices of any Muslim who follows the way of Ahl-ul-Sunnah (those adhering to the Sunnah and the Muslim main body) are lawful. Anyone who claims that the sacrifices of these people are unlawful is mistaken and wrong so long as you, praise be to Allah, follow the way of Ahl-ul-Sunnah in sincere devotion to Allah and follow His legislation, then your sacrifices are lawful.

General Mufti of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Chairman of the Departments of Scholarly Research, Ifta', Daw`ah, and Guidance

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41- Ruling on the animal slaughtered by a person whose `Aqidah is unknown

Q: Is it permissible to eat from the animals slaughtered by people whose `Aqidah (creed) is unknown, or by a person who commits sins while knowing they are Haram (prohibited), or a person who makes Du`a' (supplication) to the Jinn (creatures created from fire) unintentionally?

A: If a person is not known for their Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship) i.e. they are Muslims who testify that there is no deity but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah; it is Halal (lawful) to eat the animals slaughtered by them. However, if it is known that such a person has committed some act of Shirk, such as making Du`a' (supplication) to the Jinn or the dead and seeking their help; this is considered major Shirk and it is not permissible to eat the animals slaughtered by them. Making Du`a' to the Jinn includes asking them to do something, grant something, or cause something to happen to a particular person. The same is equally applied to a person, who makes Du`a' to the dead or the angels, seeks their help, or makes vows for them; all these are forms of

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Major Shirk. May Allah grant us safety!

On the other hand, eating from the meat of an animal is not rendered Haram (prohibited) if slaughtered by a sinful person, unless they deem it lawful or the animal is slaughtered in contradiction with the Shar`y (Islamic legal) way. However, if a person deems sins lawful, such as Zina (premarital sexual intercourse and/or adultery), Khamr (intoxicants), Riba (usury), ungratefulness to parents, false testimony and such unanimously deemed unlawful acts, they are considered Kafirs (disbelievers). May Allah save us from all that displeases Him!

42- The way of slaughtering animals

Q: What is the Shar`y (Islamic legal) way of slaughtering animals and camels on particular?

A: The Shar`y slaughtering of camels, sheep and cows is to cut the throat, esophagus and jugular veins in the neck; this is the most perfect and best way of slaughtering. The throat is the air passage, esophagus is a tube for the passage of food and drink from the pharynx to the stomach, and the jugular veins are two veins around the neck that drain blood more easily after being cut by the slaughterer. If these four parts are cut, the slaughter

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is Halal (lawful) according to all scholars.

A second way of slaughtering is to cut the throat, esophagus and one of the jugular veins; this way is also Halal and good, though it is less perfect than the first way of slaughtering.

A third way of slaughtering is to cut the throat and esophagus only without the jugular veins; this way is also sound and advocated by some scholars, who quoted as evidence the saying of the Prophet (peace be upon him): ﴾If the killing tool causes blood to gush out and if Allah's Name is mentioned, eat (of the slaughtered animal). But do not slaughter with a tooth or a nail.﴿ This is the preponderant opinion in this issue. The Sunnah (whatever is reported from the Prophet) is to slaughter the camel by way of Nahr (slaughter by a vertical movement of the spear to the lower part of the throat) while it is standing on its three legs, having its left foreleg tied, and stab it at the point where the neck meets the chest. As for the cows and sheep, the Sunnah is to slaughter it by way of Dhabh (slaughter by a horizontal cut through the throat) while making it lie down on its left side. Besides, the Sunnah when making the Dhabh or Nahr is to make the animal face the Qiblah (direction faced for Prayer towards the Ka`bah). This is not Wajib (obligatory); rather it is Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet). If someone slaughters without facing the Qiblah, the slaughtering is Halal. Likewise, if someone adopts the way of Nahr for what should be slaughtered by way of Dhabh or vice versa, the sacrifice is Halal but in contradiction with the Sunnah. May Allah grant us success!

43 - Directing sacrificial animals to the Qiblah is recommended, not obligatory

From 'Abdul 'Aziz ibn 'Abdullah ibn Baz to the dear honored brother in Islam Gh. Sh., may Allah grant you safety!

As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh (May Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you!) :

With reference to your inquiry registered in the Department of the Scholarly Research and Ifta', numbered (760) and Dated 24 / 2 / 1497 A.H., in which you asked a number of questions, I inform you that directing sacrificial animals, whether they are cattle or poultry, to the Qiblah while slaughtering is recommended, not obligatory. As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh.

General Chairman

of the Departments of Scholarly Research, Ifta', Da`wah and Guidance.

44- The neck is the place for Dhabh and Nahr

Q: Is there any specific place in the neck that must be cut?

A: Yes, all the upper and lower parts of the neck are places for Dhabh (slaughter by a horizontal cut through the throat) and Nahr (slaughter by a vertical movement of the spear to the lower part of the throat). However, it is Sunnah (a commendable act) that camels are stabbed at the point where the neck meets the chest whereas cows and sheep are slaughtered at the upper part of the neck to cut the throat, the esophagus, and the two jugular veins as stated previously.

45- The slaughtered animal is Halal when the throat and the esophagus are cut

Q: I am from Sudan. People here stipulate that slaughtering must be behind the Adam's apple. When a person detaches the Adam's apple from the head of the animal, people do not eat from its meat. Is this right?

A: Slaughtering is valid as long as the throat and the esophagus are cut even if the Adam's apple is detached from the head of the animal. However, it is better and more perfect to cut the four things i.e. the throat, the esophagus and the two jugular veins.

46 - Ruling on slaughtered animals of women

Q: Is it permissible for a woman to slaughter an animal? Is it permissible to eat from an animal that is slaughtered by a woman? .

A: A woman is permitted to slaughter an animal like a man, as authentically reported in the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him). It is also permissible to eat from any animal slaughtered by a woman if she is a Muslim or from the People of the Book as long as this is conducted in accordance with the Shar`y (Islamically lawful) way of slaughtering. It is noteworthy that it is allowed for a woman to slaughter an animal even when a man who can slaughter is present, since the presence of a man is not a condition to make a slaughtered animal of a woman Halal (lawful) to eat.

47. Ruling on eating animals killed by electricity or neck snapping

Q: A brother from Germany asks: Christian slaughterhouses in most European and American countries are accustomed to killing sheep by electric shock and chicken by snapping their necks. What is the ruling on that?

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A: The Ever-Glorious Qur'an, the purified Sunnah (whatever is reported from the Prophet) and Ijma` (consensus of scholars) indicate that the food of the People of the Book is permissible. Allah (Glorified be He) says: ﴿Made lawful to you this day are At-Tayyibât [all kinds of Halâl (lawful) foods, which Allâh has made lawful (meat of slaughtered eatable animals, milk products, fats, vegetables and fruits)]. The food (slaughtered cattle, eatable animals) of the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) is lawful to you and yours is lawful to them.﴾ This Ayah (Qur'anic verse) is mentioned inSurah Al-Ma'idah.It demonstrates the permissibility of eating the food of the People of the Book, including the slaughtered meat. In this regard, they are treated like Muslims. However, if it is known that they kill in a way that is not Shar`y (Islamically lawful), the meat is considered Maytah (carrion; flesh of dead animals) and should not be eaten. The same ruling is also applied to Muslims who kill in a way that is not Shar`y. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴿Forbidden to you (for food) are: Al-Maitah (the dead animals - cattle - beast not slaughtered), blood, the flesh of swine, and that on which Allâh's Name has not been mentioned while slaughtering, (that which has been slaughtered as a sacrifice for others than Allâh, or has been slaughtered for idols) and that which has been killed by strangling, or by a violent blow, or by a headlong fall, or by the goring of horns﴾ Therefore, the animals that are slaughtered - whether by Muslims or non-Muslims - by strangling, a violent blow, a headlong fall or goring of horns are prohibited to be eaten. Hence, the Ayah mentioned above restricts the general meaning that is mentioned in the Ayah that reads: ﴿The food (slaughtered cattle, eatable animals) of the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) is lawful to you﴾ In addition, it restricts the general evidence that indicate the permissibility of the meat slaughtered by Muslims;

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as the Ayah denotes that it is prohibited to eat from it if it is slaughtered in a non-Shar`y way. Regarding what you mentioned about the Christian slaughterhouses that are accustomed to slaughtering sheep by electric shock and chicken by snapping their necks, I asked some experts about the meaning of 'electrifying' and 'snapping', as you did not clarify their meanings. The expert told me that 'electrifying' means killing a live animal by electricity without adopting the Shar`y way of slaughtering, while 'snapping' means cutting off the head at once. Thus, if this is the real meaning of 'electrifying', then the animal slaughtered in this way is considered Maytah, which is prohibited to be eaten. This is because the animal is not slaughtered in a Shar`y way, which entails cutting the throat

and gullet, and causing blood to flow out. It was authentically reported that Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) said: ﴾If the killing tool causes blood to gush out, and if Allah's Name is mentioned, eat (of the slaughtered animal). But do not slaughter with a nail or a tooth.﴿ Also, if this is the real meaning of 'snapping', then the animal killed in this way is permissible to be eaten; as this way includes the actions that should be done during the Shar`y slaughtering, i.e., cutting the throat, gullet and jugular veins, and causing blood to flow out. However, if 'electrifying' and 'snapping' mean something different from what we mentioned, please inform us in order to answer you in light of that. May Allah grant us all success in the way of seeking the truth!

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Ruling on eating from animals killed by electric shocks

All praise be to Allah Alone, and peace and blessings be upon His Messenger, and his family and Companions!

I read the Fatwa (legal opinion issued by a qualified Muslim scholar) that was published in Al-Muslimun Newspaper issue no. 14 on 21/08/1405 A.H. for His Eminence Shaykh Yusuf Al-Qaradawy. The Fatwa contained a paragraph that reads: "It is Halal (lawful) for Muslims to eat from the frozen meat, whether chicken or beef, which is imported from the People of the Book and which is of animals that were killed by electric shocks. This ruling applies as long as the People of the Book themselves regard such meat as Halal, etc."

What I would like to say here is that Fatwas that deal with the concerned matter need to be clarified in detail. Both the Qur'an and Sunnah (whatever is reported from the Prophet) signify that animals which are slaughtered by the People of the Book are Halal and that those which are slaughtered by Kafirs (disbelievers) are Haram (prohibited). Regarding this, Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾Made lawful to you this day are At-Tayyibât [all kinds of Halâl (lawful) foods, which Allâh has made lawful (meat of slaughtered eatable animals, milk products, fats, vegetables and fruits)]. The food (slaughtered cattle, eatable animals) of the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) is lawful to you and yours is lawful to them.﴿ This Ayah (Qur'anic verse)

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is an explicit text for the permissibility of eating from the food of the People of the Book i.e. Jews and Christians. Moreover, food here refers to slaughtered animals and the Ayah implies that animals

which are slaughtered by Kafirs are Haram. Nevertheless, scholars excluded from the foregoing ruling the meat of animals which have been slaughtered as a sacrifice for anyone other than Allah or have been slaughtered for idols or on which Allah's Name has not been mentioned while slaughtering. Such meat is declared absolutely Haram by Allah's saying: ﴿Forbidden to you (for food) are: Al-Maitah (the dead animals- cattle- beast not slaughtered), blood, the flesh of swine, and that on which Allâh's Name has not been mentioned while slaughtering﴾ On the other hand, animals that have been slaughtered in an Islamically illegal manner, such as by electric shocks or strangling, are regarded as Haram as those that have been killed by a violent blow or suffocation according to the reality of every case and whether such animals have been killed by the People of the Book or Muslims. As for animals that we do not know the way through which they have been slaughtered (killed), the original ruling is to consider them Halal whether they have been slaughtered by Muslims or the People of the Book. Besides, animals that have been electrically shocked or hit strongly but then slaughtered in the Shar`y (Islamic legal) way while they were still alive are considered Halal, for Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴿Forbidden to you (for food) are: Al-Maitah (the dead animals - cattle - beast not slaughtered), blood, the flesh of swine, and that on which Allâh's Name has not been mentioned while slaughtering, (that which has been slaughtered as a sacrifice for others than Allâh, or has been slaughtered for idols) and that which has been killed by strangling, or by a violent blow, or by a headlong fall, or by the goring of horns, and that which has been (partly) eaten by a wild animal, unless you are able to slaughter it (before its death), and that which is sacrificed (slaughtered) on An-Nusub (stone-altars). (Forbidden) also is to use arrows seeking luck or decision; (all) that is Fisqun (disobedience of Allâh and sin)﴾ The foregoing Ayah, thus, signifies that animals that have been killed by strangling

or by a violent blow are Haram to eat. The same ruling, thus, applies to animals that have been electrically shocked then died before being slaughtered. This also applies to animals that have been hit on their heads or in any other part of their bodies then died before being slaughtered.

Consequently, it is clear now that the Fatwa of Shaykh Yusuf (may Allah grant him success) is a general one. Anyway, the fact that the Jews or the Christians regard animals that have been killed by strangling or electric shocks as Halal does not render the same Halal for Muslims. This also would apply if some Muslims were to regard such animals as Halal. The ruling, thus, is to be decided according to what the purified Shar` (Islamic law) declares as Halal or Haram. To make it more clear, the generality of the Ayah that permits eating from the food of the People of the Book may not be explained as making animals that have been killed by strangling, violent blow, etc. Halal though they are explicitly declared as Haram according to the other Ayah. Rather, the general Ayah has to be understood in light of the plain Ayah as the rule of Usul-ul-Fiqh (principles of Islamic jurisprudence) states.

Regarding the Hadith which is narrated by `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) and that Shaykh Yusuf referred to, it relates to some people who were new Muslims. Thus, such a Hadith may not be used as a proof for the permissibility of eating from animals which are slaughtered by Kafirs and which the Shar` declares as Haram. Following is the text of the concerned Hadith: On the authority of `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her): ﴾... that some people said to the Prophet (peace be upon him): 'Some people offer us meat (to eat) while we do not know whether they mentioned the Name of Allah on the slaughtered animal or

not?' The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: 'You may yourselves mention the Name of Allah on it then eat from it.' She (`Aishah) said: 'Such people were new Muslims.'﴿ (Related by Al-Bukhari)

It is worth mentioning that Muslims have to advise each other and cooperate in righteousness and piety. Finally, I ask Allah (Exalted be He) to help us, the Eminent Shaykh Yusuf, and all Muslims to be right in our sayings and deeds. Verily, Allah is the Best One to be asked for help. May peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family, and Companions!

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Chapter on game rulings

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49 - Mentioning Allah's Name upon shooting the game

Q: Is it sufficient to say: Bismillah (i.e. in the Name of Allah) and Allahu Akbar (i.e. Allah is the Greatest) while inserting the bullet into the gun when hunting or do I have to mention the Name of Allah while shooting? Please, advise. May Allah reward you with the best reward!

A: It is an obligation to mention the Name of Allah while shooting and it is insufficient to mention it while inserting the bullet into the gun, because of the Prophet's (peace be upon him) saying: ﴾If you shoot your arrow, recite the name of Allah.﴿ . Agreed upon its authenticity from the Hadith of 'Ady Ibn Hatim (may Allah be pleased with him) and this is the wording related by Muslim.

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Forgetting to mention Allah's Name while shooting birds and the like

Q: We live in the desert and we hunt migrating birds by shooting them with guns; however, sometimes, we forget to mention the Name of Allah while shooting the bird which dies as a result of the shooting. Are we allowed to eat it? .

A: If a Muslim forgets to mention the Name of Allah while slaughtering, shooting or sending a trained hunting dog, then the slaughtered animal and the hunted animal if found dead, are lawful to be eaten, because of Allah's (Exalted be He) saying: ﴾Our Lord! Punish us not if we forget or fall into error﴿ It is also authentically reported that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: ﴾Allah said in reply: "I did."﴿ . Reported by Muslim. It is also reported that he (peace be upon him) said: ﴾Allah has pardoned for me my people's mistakes and [their] forgetfulness and for what they have done under duress.﴿ Moreover, there are other narrations supporting this ruling. May Allah grant us success!

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Book on oaths

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51- Ruling on swearing by other than Allah

Q: Is it permissible to swear by the Prophet (peace be upon him)?

A: Muslims are not allowed to swear by any created thing, neither by the Prophet (peace be upon him), Ka`bah, Amanah (trust), nor any other thing. This ruling is in accordance with the opinion of Jumhur (dominant majority of scholars). In fact, some scholars classified this ruling as unanimously agreed upon. However, there is a Shadh (irregular) opinion reported with regard to the permissibility of swearing by the Prophet (peace be upon him), but this opinion has no justification. Rather, it is invalid and contradicts the consensus of scholars and the sound and authentic Hadith reported with regard to the prohibition of swearing by other than Allah. From these Hadith is that which was related by Al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Amir Al-Mu'minin (Commander of the Believers) `Umar ibn Al-Khattab (may Allah be pleased with him) who narrated that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾Verily! Allah forbids you to swear by your fathers. If one has to take an oath, they should swear by Allah or otherwise keep silent.﴿ Moreover, it was reported in the two Sahih (authentic) Books of Hadith on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾Whoever among you swears, (saying by mistake) in his oath 'By Al-Lat

and Al- `Uzza', then he should say, 'There is no deity but Allah.'》 The justification of renewing Faith is that

the one who swears by other than Allah commits an act of Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship) and, therefore, the Kaffarah (expiation) for that is to say the Shahadah (Testimony of Faith) with truthfulness and sincerity, in order to expiate for the act of Shirk they committed. Al-Tirmidhy and Al-Hakim related with an authentic Sanad (chain of narrators) on the authority of Ibn `Umar (may Allah be pleased with them) that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: 《Anyone who swears by other than Allah has committed Kufr (disbelief) or Shirk.》 Also, Abu Dawud related on the authority of Buraydah ibn Al-Husayb (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: 《Anyone who swears by Amanah is not one of us.》 On the authority of Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) who narrated that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: 《Do not swear by your fathers, or by your mothers, or by rivals to Allah; but only swear by Allah when you are speaking the truth.》 (Related by Abu Dawud and Al-Nasa'y) Among those who supported the prohibition of swearing by other than Allah is Imam Abu `Umar ibn `Abdul-Bar Al-Namiry (may Allah be merciful with him). On the other hand, some scholars judged swearing by other than Allah (Exalted be He) as reprehensible, but being reprehensible means it is nearly prohibited, following the texts reported in this regard and assuming the good intention of scholars' opinion. It is to be noted that some of those who are lenient with regard to swearing by other than Allah justified their stance by what is reported in Sahih Muslim that the Prophet (peace be upon him) 《said concerning the one who asked him about the different rulings and teachings of Islam:

By his father, he will be successful if he is truthful.》 The answer to this argument is that this narration is Shadh and is not in accordance with authentic Hadith, and it should not be taken as evidence. This is the ruling on Shadh narrations according to scholars' opinion, which describe narrations not in line with the narration of other trustworthy narrators in terms of wording, chain of narrators, or both. Moreover, according to Ibn `Abdul-Bar (may Allah be merciful with him), this statement might have been distorted, and the original statement was, "By Allah, he will be successful," but some writers or narrators distorted it. It is also possible that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said this before the prohibition of swearing by other than Allah (Exalted be He) was revealed. Anyway, this narration is a Shadh solitary narration, which must not be relied upon by those who believe in Allah and the Last Day. It goes against the clear authentic Hadith confirming the prohibition of swearing by other than Allah and considering it among the prohibited acts of Shirk. It was also related by Al-Nasa'y with an authentic Sanad on the authority of Sa`d ibn Abu Waqqas (may Allah be pleased with him) that he took an oath by Al-Lat and Al- `Uzza and asked the Prophet (peace be upon him) about that. Thereupon, he (peace be upon him) said to him: 《Say, "There is no deity but Allah Alone Who has no partner, to Him belongs all sovereignty and praise and He is over all things omnipotent," then spit three times to your left, seek refuge with Allah from Satan, and do not do that again.》 This narration confirms the severe prohibition of swearing by other than Allah (Exalted be He) and denotes that it is an act of Shirk and one of the incitements of Satan. It also states the prohibition of repeating such an act after knowing the ruling. I ask Allah to grant us and you protection in our religious affairs, to reform

our intentions and actions, and to safeguard us and all Muslims from following the evil suggestions of Satan, indeed, He is All-Hearing and Ever Near. May Allah protect us and you!

As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh (May Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you!)

52- Issue on swearing by other than Allah

All praise be to Allah Alone. To proceed...

I read the article published on the eleventh page of Riyadh Newspaper on 23/12/1402 A.H. under the title "A call from a citizen who lost his money." This article included some phrases that should be considered, such as: "By the Lord of the Worlds and His honest Messenger, I beseech you!" As it is not permissible to take an oath except by Allah or any of His Names or Attributes, I think it is necessary that I draw people's attention to this. Taking an oath by anyone other than Allah is absolutely not permissible, for the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴿Whoever has to take an oath has to swear by Allah or remain silent.﴾ The Prophet (peace be upon him) also said: ﴿Whoever swears by other than Allah commits Kufr (disbelief) or Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship).﴾ There are many other Hadith to this effect. It is, thus, Wajib (obligatory) for press and all media members to review articles and all other materials to be released before they are published to detect such

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faults. This is to keep our press pure and free from inconvenient Munkar (that which is unacceptable or disapproved of by Islamic law and Muslims of sound intellect). On the other hand, it is Wajib for every Muslim to acquire comprehensive understanding of Din (religion) and to learn the well-established religious matters. May Allah help us all to have beneficial knowledge and do righteous deeds! May peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family, and Companions!

53- Muslims are ordained to take oath by Allah Alone

It is Allah (May He be Glorified and Exalted) Alone Who has the exclusive right to swear by what He wills of His creatures on whatever He wills of other creatures. It is thus not permissible for any person whosoever to swear by anything other than Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He). Allah commanded His servants to take oaths only by Him (Glorified and Exalted be He) or any of His Attributes. Unlike the practice of the Mushriks (those who associate others with Allah in His Divinity or worship) in Jahiliyyah (pre-Islamic time of ignorance) who used to swear by things other than Allah such as Al-Ka`bah, honor, prophets, angels, Shaykhs, kings, great people, forefathers, swords, or any other object used for taking oaths by many of those ignorant of religious rulings. According to the Ijma` (consensus) of scholars, it is not permissible to swear by any of the things mentioned above. This is because the Prophet (peace be upon him)

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said: ﴾Whoever swears by anyone other than Allah is a Kafir (disbeliever) or a Mushrik (one who associates others with Allah in His Divinity or worship).﴿ The Prophet (peace be upon him) also said: ﴾Verily! Allah forbids you to swear by your fathers. If one has to take an oath, they have to swear only by Allah.﴿ (Related by Al-Bukhari). However, it is related in the Sahih (authentic) Book of Hadith of Muslim that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾Whoever has to take an oath is to swear by Allah or remain silent. (I.e. They have not to swear by others than Allah).﴿ In canother Hadith: ﴾Do not swear by your fathers or by your mothers and swear by Allah only when you are speaking the truth.﴿ The Prophet (peace be upon him) also said: ﴾Whoever swears by Amanah (trustworthiness) is not one of us.﴿ In addition, it is narrated that Ibn Mas`ud (may Allah be pleased with him) said: "To swear by Allah falsely is dearer to me than swearing by other than Him in truth." There are many Hadiths and Athars (narrations from the Companions) to the same effect.

It is thus obligatory on Muslims to keep their oaths and abstain from swearing except by Allah or any of His Attributes. They have to avoid swearing by anything, whatsoever, other than Allah in accordance with the Hadiths mentioned above. I ask Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) to guide Muslims to what pleases Him, grant them good understanding of religion, and protect us all against delusive temptations, the evils within ourselves, and our misdeeds. He is the One Who is Capable of doing so. May peace and blessings be upon Allah's Servant and Messenger our Prophet Muhammad, his family, and Companions!

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54- Swearing by any creature is a great Munkar

Q: A questioner sent us a message that reads: "Some people are in the habit of swearing by the Prophet (peace be upon him) and it has become a habitual matter for them without intending Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship) or any other sin. So, what is the ruling on this regard?

A: Swearing by the Prophet (peace be upon him) or any other creature is a grave Munkar (that which is unacceptable or disapproved of by Islamic law and Muslims of sound intellect) and a forbidden act of Shirk. Thus, it is not permissible for anyone to swear except by Allah Alone. Imam Ibn `Abdul-Bar (may Allah be merciful with him) related that scholars agreed to that it is not permissible to swear by other than Allah. Authentic Hadith of the Prophet (peace be upon him) forbid this and declare it to be an act of Shirk, such as the Hadith related in the Two Sahih (authentic) Books of Hadith (i.e. Al-Bukhari and Muslim) that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾Verily! Allah forbids you to swear by your fathers. If must to take an oath, he should swear by Allah or otherwise remain silent.﴿ Another wording reads: ﴾...he should swear by Allah or keep silent.﴿

I addition, Abu Dawud and Al-Tirmidhy reported through an authentic chain of transmission that the Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: ﴾He who swears by anyone but Allah commits an act of disbelief, or Shirk.﴿

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Also, it is authentically related that the Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: ﴾He who swears by Amanah (trust) is not of us.﴿ Hadiths on this issue are numerous and well-known. Thus, it is obligatory upon all Muslims not to swear by anyone other than Allah Alone. Again, it is not permissible to swear by any creature, whatsoever, according to the Hadiths mentioned above and others. Hence, one who is accustomed to doing so should beware, and should warn his family members, companions and others against it. The Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: ﴾Whoever, among you, sees something abominable should rectify it with his hand; and if he has not strength enough to do it, then he should do it with his tongue; and if he has not strength enough to do it, (even) then he should (abhor it) in his heart, and that is the least of Faith.﴿ (Related by Muslim in his Sahih [Book])

Swearing by other than Allah is a form of minor Shirk based on the above quoted Hadith. It could even be a form of major shirk if one has it in his heart that whatever is sworn by deserves glorification or worship along with Allah, or any other disbelieving objectives. We ask Allah to grant all Muslims protection against this and to grant them understanding of His religion and safety from all things that bring about His wrath; He is All-Hearing, Ever-Near.

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55- Issue on taking an oath by the Prophet (peace be upon him)

Q: Is swearing by the Prophet (peace be upon him) considered a valid oath which if not fulfilled, requires Kaffarah (expiation)?

A: It is not permissible to take an oath by other than Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) including the Prophet (peace be upon him) and any other human. Since swearing by other than Allah is considered an invalid oath, no Kaffarah is due for it. This is because the Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: ﴾Whoever must take an oath is to swear by Allah or remain silent.﴿ (Agreed upon by Al-Bukhari and Muslim). The Prophet (peace be upon him) also stated: ﴾Whoever swears by other than Allah is a Kafir (disbeliever) or a Mushrik (one who associates others with Allah in His Divinity or worship).﴿ (Related by Imam Ahmad, Abu Dawud, and Al-Tirmidhy with an authentic chain of narrators).

However, whoever takes an oath by other than Allah must offer sincere Tawbah (repentance to Allah). This entails refraining from swearing by Allah, feeling remorse for past oaths, and having a sincere determination not to return to swearing by other than Allah. Allah

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(Glorified be He) states: ﴾O you who believe! Turn to Allâh with sincere repentance!﴿ There are many other Ayahs (Qur'anic verses) and Hadiths to the same effect. May Allah grant us success!

56- Ruling on swearing by other than Allah

Q: What is the ruling on taking an oath by the Prophet (peace be upon him)?

A: Taking an oath by whomsoever other than Allah is not permissible. This includes the Prophet (peace be upon him) as well as any other human. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴿Whoever must take an oath must swear by Allah or remain silent.﴾ He (peace be upon him) also said: ﴿Do not swear by your fathers, by your mothers, or by rivals to Allah; and swear by Allah only when you are speaking the truth﴾ and: ﴿Whoever swears by other than Allah commits (an act of) Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship).﴾ (Related by Imam Ahmad with an authentic Sanad (chain of narrators) on the authority of `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him)) In addition, Abu Dawud and Al-Tirmidhy related, with an authentic Sanad, on the authority of Ibn `Umar (may Allah be pleased with them both) that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴿Whoever swears by anyone other than Allah commits Kufr (disbelief) or Shirk.﴾ The Prophet (peace be upon him) also said: ﴿Whoever swears by Amanah (trust) is not one of us.﴾ Accordingly, one must swear by Allah Alone for it is not permissible to swear by the Prophet, any other human being, Amanah, the Ka`bah, etc.

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An oath is to be taken by Allah Alone, for the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴿Whoever must take an oath must swear by Allah or remain silent.﴾ May Allah protect us all!

57- Ruling on swearing by the Ka`bah

Q: What is the ruling on taking an oath by the Ka`bah, etc.? What is the formula of a permissible oath?

A: It is not permissible to swear by the Ka`bah or any other created thing. This is because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: (Whoever must take an oath must swear by Allah or remain silent.) (Agreed upon by Imams Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

The Prophet (peace be upon him) also said: (Whoever swears by other than Allah commits Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship).) (Related by Imam Ahmad on the authority of `Umar ibn Al-Khattab (may Allah be pleased with him) with an authentic Sanad (chain of narrators)) He (peace be upon him) also said: (Whoever swears by other than Allah commits Kufr (disbelief) or Shirk.) (Related by Abu Dawud and Al-Tirmidhy with an authentic Sanad on the authority of `Abdullah ibn `Umar ibn Al-Khattab (may Allah be pleased with them both)) There are many other Hadith to the same effect. It is, thus, clear that it is not permissible to take oaths by the Ka`bah, Amanah (trust), prophets, or any other human being.

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The Shar`y (Islamic legal) oath is to swear by Allah Alone by saying, for example: "By Allah I will do such and such thing," or "By Allah I will not do such and such thing." It is also permissible that a person takes an oath by One of Allah's Names or Attributes, such as Al-Rahman (the Most Gracious), Al-Raheem (the Most Merciful), Malik Al-Mulk (the Owner of Sovereignty), and by Allah's Life and Knowledge, etc.

(The Prophet (peace be upon him) would often swear saying: By Him in Whose Hand is my soul.)

May Allah grant us success!

58- Impermissibility of taking oaths by Salah or trustworthiness

Q: Is it permissible to say to a person "By your trustworthiness!", "By your Salah 'Prayer'", or "You will be sinful if you do so and so." It is worth mentioning that such phrases are widespread amongst women and children. Please, advise. May Allah reward you with the best!

A: It is not permissible to take oaths by Salah, trustworthiness, that a person will be sinful if they do so and so, or by any other created being. Taking oaths is to be by Allah Alone. It is thus not permissible to say: "By my trustworthiness, by so-and-so person's trustworthiness, by so-and-so person's life,

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or by my Salah I did not do so." Likewise, it is not permissible to ask a person to swear by their trustworthiness, Salah, or Zakah (obligatory charity). All such forms of oath have no basis in Din (Islam). Salah and Zakah are acts of servants (of Allah) that are not to be sworn by, for oaths are to be taken by Allah Alone (Glorified and Exalted be He) or His Attributes. The Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: ﴾Whoever wants to take an oath should swear by Allah or remain silent. 'i.e. They must not swear by other than Allah.'﴿ (Agreed upon by Imams Al-Bukhari and Muslim). The Prophet (peace be upon him) also stated: ﴾Whoever swears by anything other than Allah commits an act of Shirk 'associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship'".﴿ (Related by Imam Ahmad with an authentic Sanad 'chain of narrators' on the authority of `Umar 'may Allah be pleased with him'.) This same Hadith is also related by Al-Tirmidhi and Abu Dawud with a Sahih (authentic) Sanad on the authority of Ibn `Umar (may Allah be pleased with them both) in this wording: ﴾Whoever swears by anything but Allah is a Kafir 'disbeliever' or a Mushrik 'one who associates others with Allah in His Divinity or worship'.﴿ Also, the Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: ﴾Whoever swears by Amanah 'trustworthiness' is not of us.﴿ Accordingly, every believing man and woman has to beware of this. They should not swear except by Allah Alone (Glorified and Exalted be He) saying when necessary: "By Allah I did not do so." However, it is prescribed that a Muslim should keep from swearing constantly, for taking oaths is only regarding serious matters. Allah (Exalted be He) states: ﴾And protect your oaths (i.e. do not swear much).﴿

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Therefore, when there is a serious need to take an oath and one swears by Allah Alone while speaking the truth, there is no blame on them. Taking oaths by trustworthiness, the Prophet (peace be upon him), the Ka`bah, the life or honor of so-and-so, or a person's Salah is not permissible as explained in the Hadith above.

Finally, saying: "It is entrusted to me" is not an oath. It means that something is entrusted to a person for which they are responsible. As for swearing by trustworthiness, Salah, Zakah or a father's life, this is not permissible. It is considered swearing by other than Allah. We ask Allah to guide us

all!

59- A question on oaths

Q: Did the Prophet (peace be upon him) swear by other than Allah he said: ﴾By his father, he shall succeed if he is true (to what he professed).﴿ **If not, how to explain this Hadith, may Allah reward you!**

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A: During the early times of Islam and the Hijrah (Prophet's migration to Madinah) people used to swear by their fathers and then the Prophet (peace be upon him) forbade them to do so and said, ﴾Allah forbids you to swear by your fathers.﴿ As for the Hadith you are asking about, ﴾By his father, he shall succeed if he is true (to what he professed),﴿ it was said before forbiddance. When it became forbidden, the Prophet and Muslims abandoned it and swearing became only by Allah. The Prophet (peace be upon him) stated, ﴾He who swears by anyone except Allah commits an act of Shirk (associating partners to Allah in worship).﴿ He also said: ﴾He who swears by Amanah (trust) is not of us.﴿ And: ﴾Do not swear by your fathers, or by your mothers, or by rivals to Allah; and swear by Allah only when you are speaking the truth.﴿ The last matter which the Shari`ah approved is the prohibition of swearing by other than Allah, whereas the Prophet's saying, ﴾By his father, he shall succeed if he were true (to what he professed),﴿ it was before the prohibition.

60- Ruling on saying: "Never! I swear 1000 oaths."

Q: Some people when asked about something and want to deny it, they say: "Never! I swear 1000 oaths that so and so did not happen..." What is the ruling on this in our purified Shari`ah (Islamic Law)? May Allah reward you!

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A: A: I am not aware of any basis for this. However, one should speak the truth whether in negation or affirmation in accordance with the question. As for saying: "Never! I swear 1000 oaths, it means denial of what the other party asks about, as in Allah's statement in Surah-Yusuf, (They said: "How perfect is Allâh (or Allâh forbid)! No man is this!) May Allah grant us success!

61- Ruling on taking an oath to do something and then choosing a better option

Q: A woman swore not to return to her family's house and after a time she returned to it, what is the ruling on this? Please explain, may Allah reward you!

A: A: If one takes an oath that he will never visit so and so, or he will never enter the house of so and so or the like, then he views that there is an interest in breaking his oath, there is no blame on him to do so, but he should offer Kaffarah (expiation) for an oath. The Prophet (peace be upon him) stated, ﴿Whenever you take an oath to do something and later you find that something else is better than the first,

then offer a Kaffarah for your oath and do what is best.﴾ Also, the Prophet (peace be upon him) stated, ﴿By Allah, in-sha' Allah (if Allah wills), if I ever take an oath to do something and then I find something else better than the first, I will offer expiation for my oath and do the better thing.﴾ Kaffarah is to feed ten needy persons, each half a Sa` (1 Sa` = 2.172 kg) from the staple food of the country, such as dates and the like; or to provide them with a dinner or lunch meal, or to clothe them with a shirt or an Izar (garment worn below the waist) and a garment for each one, or to manumit a bondsman. If one is unable to do so, one should fast three days. These are the forms of Kaffarah. It is necessary that one seeks the best option; if breaking ones oath is better, one is advised to do so and perform Kaffarah; if observing the oath is better, one should not break it. Allah (Exalted be He) stated, ﴿And protect your oaths (i.e. do not swear much).﴾ Accordingly, if there is an interest in breaking one's oath such as a person forsaking his brother or relative for no legal cause which is not allowable, one should break his oath and offer the kaffarah.

62- If a person swears that another would do something, but he does not, the swearer must offer Kaffarah

Q: When I learned that one of my friends wanted to perform Hajj, I swore that he would go with me and he agreed. Afterwards, he apologized for not going because he was in debt. Must I offer a Kaffarah (expiation)? It is noteworthy to mention that I did not condition my oath on his willingness to perform Hajj.

A: If you swore that he would go with you, but he did not; you must offer a Kaffarah for this oath.

63- Swearing not to do something and then being compelled to do it

Q: I swore by the Mus-haf (Arabic Qur'an) that I would not do a certain thing, but I was forced to break this oath and I would like to expiate for this. What should I do?

A: You should pay Kaffarah (expiation) for an oath, if you did broke your oath, whether you swore by the Mus-haf or not. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says,

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﴾Allâh will not punish you for what is unintentional in your oaths, but He will punish you for your deliberate oaths; for its expiation feed ten Masâkîn (poor persons), on a scale of the average of that with which you feed your own families, or clothe them or manumit a slave. But whosoever cannot afford (that), then he should fast for three days. That is the expiation for the oaths when you have sworn. And protect your oaths (i.e. do not swear much).﴿ If you provide lunch or dinner for the needy; if you clothe them; or if you give each of them half a Sa` (1 Sa` = 2.172 kg) of dates, wheat or rice, that will be enough. If you have sworn to commit a sin such as smoking, drinking intoxicants and so on, it is prohibited to do it even if you did not swear to abstain from it. Fear Allah and beware of what Allah has prohibited!

64- Ruling on forgetfully breaking an oath

Q: I argued with a colleague at work and swore not to eat or drink in his house. One time, I went to his house and ate some fruits forgetfully and after that I remembered the oath. I hope you would clarify this matter for me. If I offer Kaffarah (expiation) for an oath, am I allowed to eat and drink in his house or not?

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A: If you did so out of forgetfulness, nothing is due on you but it is better to eat with your colleague if he is a good and righteous person and to offer Kaffarah. If he is an evil person who openly sins and calls for wrongdoing, you should praise Allah and do not eat with him or visit him. However, if he is good, it is better for you to visit him and eat with him at his house and offer Kaffarah, which entails feeding ten needy persons or clothing them. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾Whenever you take an oath to do something and later you find that something else is better than the first, then do the better one and offer Kaffarah for your oath.﴿ He (peace be upon him) also said: ﴾By Allah, In sha'a Allah (if Allah wills), whenever I take an oath to do something and then find something else better than the first, I offer Kaffarah for my oath and do what is better.﴿

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65- Ruling on perjury

Q: My brother had a passport, but he wanted to get another one. During the investigation, a detective asked him to swear by the Mus-haf (Arabic Qur'an) that he had no other passport. Out of fear, my brother did. What is the ruling on this? Should he offer a sacrifice, or does a Kaffarah (expiation) suffice for this?

A: He and anyone who lies must offer Tawbah (repentance to Allah). He should determine never to return to this deed. Regarding Kaffarah, it is not prescribed for false oaths according to the most correct view. Kaffarah is to be offered for broken future oaths, for example, if a person says: "By Allah, I will not do such and such thing" or "By Allah, I will not speak to so and so," and the like. For a liar, nothing is required except Tawbah.

Liars should repent of their deeds, regret them, and leave the sin. Further, they should have a strong determination not to do this anymore, out of being sincere to Allah and to seek His reward. Upon this, Allah will forgive them, as He wipes out sins by sincere Tawbah, according to His Statement (Glorified and Exalted be He): (And all of you beg Allâh to forgive you all, O believers, that you may be successful)

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and the Prophet's statement (peace be upon him): (The one who repents of a sin is like the one who has never sinned.)

66- Ruling on breaking an oath

Q: One day, I swore that I would not approach my wife for a certain period of time, but I broke my oath before the end of this period. What should I do? Please advise!

A: You must offer Kaffarah (expiation) for a broken oath. If a person swears to do something in the future, such as saying, "By Allah! I will not approach my wife for two or three days," then breaks his oath, he must offer Kaffarah for a broken oath. This entails feeding ten needy people, or clothing them, or emancipating a believing slave. If unable to do so, he must observe Sawm (Fast) for three days.

Kaffarah for a broken oath necessitates feeding ten needy persons, that is, providing them with dinner or lunch or giving each of them half a Sa` (1 Sa` = 2.172 kg) of dates, rice, wheat, or similar staple food; clothing them with garments sufficient for offering Salah (Prayer) while putting them on, such as Izar (garment worn below the waist);

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or observing Sawm for three days. This is the Kaffarah for breaking an oath as mentioned in the Qur'an. Allah (Glorified be He) says: ﴾Allâh will not punish you for what is unintentional in your oaths, but He will punish you for your deliberate oaths; for its expiation feed ten Masâkîn (poor persons), on a scale of the average of that with which you feed your own families, or clothe them or manumit a slave. But whosoever cannot afford (that), then he should fast for three days. That is the expiation for the oaths when you have sworn. And protect your oaths (i.e. do not swear much). Thus Allâh make clear to you His Ayât (proofs, evidence, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) that you may be grateful.﴿

67- A question on the Kaffarah of oath

Q: I am married to my cousin and before traveling to Iraq, I told her, "If you leave the house while I am away without taking my permission - I meant her travelling to Cairo for whatever the circumstances were - you are divorced." However, she traveled to Cairo claiming that her mother was ill. What is your opinion in this case? May Allah reward you!

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A: If you intended to prevent her from going out by threatening her, not divorcing her, you have to pay Kaffarah (expiation) for an oath according to the most authentic opinion of scholars, which is feeding ten needy people, clothing them or emancipating a bondsman. If you are unable to do either, you must observe Sawm (fast) for three days, and it is best to fast on consecutive days.

However, if you intended to divorce her, an occurrence of divorce has thus occurred. You may return her and have two witnesses on this, if you have not divorced her twice before. If you told her that if she left the house or went to her mother, she is considered divorced, with the intention of divorce, divorce takes place. You may return to her while she is still in her `Iddah (woman's prescribed waiting period after divorce or widowhood) by saying "I have returned to my wife who is called so-and-so" and bringing two witnesses to this. She becomes your wife again, if you have not divorced her twice before.

However, if this is the third or final occurrence of divorce, it is prohibited for you to return to her unless she legally marries another man and he has intercourse with her; not for Tahlil (a marriage contracted for the sole purpose of legalizing remarriage between an irrevocably divorced couple), according to Allah's statement (Exalted be He), ﴾And if he has divorced her (the third time), then she is not lawful unto him thereafter until she has married another husband.﴿ When the Prophet (peace be upon him)

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was asked by a woman whose husband divorced her for the third time whether she could return to her first husband, he said, ﴾You cannot (return to him) unless you have intercourse with your present husband.﴿ She should marry and also consummate it with her present husband.

68- Having one's oath broken by others

Q: I have children and I often swear that they should not do such and such thing, but they do not obey my orders. Should I offer Kaffarah (expiation) in this case?

A: If you swear that your children or others should or should not do such and such thing and they disobey you, you must offer Kaffarah. Allah (Glorified be He) says: ﴾Allâh will not punish you for what is unintentional in your oaths, but He will punish you for your deliberate oaths; for its expiation feed ten Masâkîn (poor persons), on a scale of the average of that with which you feed your own families, or clothe them or manumit a slave. But whosoever cannot afford (that), then he should fast for three days. That is the expiation for the oaths when you have sworn. And protect your oaths (i.e. do not swear much).﴿

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Similarly, if you swear to do or not to do something and then find that otherwise is better, it is permissible to break your oath and offer Kaffarah. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾Whenever you take an oath to do something and later you find that something else is better than the first, then do that which is better and offer Kaffarah for your oath.﴿ (Agreed upon by Imams Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

69- Swearing not to enter a home then buying it

Q: A woman swore not to enter the home of her son after the death of his father. Now the mother wants to buy the home and the son agrees. Is it permissible for the mother to buy it and live in it? If this is not permissible, must she offer Kaffarah (expiation)?

A: There is nothing wrong with buying the home if its owner offers it for sale. If she enters it after purchase, she need not offer Kaffarah because it becomes her home not her son's. If she enters her son's home where he lives, she should offer Kaffarah for her oath, regardless of the home being owned or rented. The Kaffarah for an oath is to feed ten Miskeen (needy) persons or clothe them or to emancipate a believing slave. If she cannot afford this, she should observe Sawm (Fast) for three days, as prescribed by Allah (Glorified be He) in Surah Al-Ma'idah.

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If she is going to feed ten Miskeen persons, she should give each of them half a Sa` (1 Sa` = 2.172 kg) of staple food, such as dates, rice or the like. If she gives each of them lunch or dinner, or clothes suitable to offer Salah (Prayer) in them, this is sufficient. If her son lives in the home she bought and she enters it before he moves to another home, she must offer the Kaffarah mentioned above. May Allah grant us success!

70- Ruling on taking an oath in a fit of anger

Q: I took an oath while I was extremely angry, is anything due on me, taking into consideration that I may not remember some of what I took an oath to do? What is the due Kaffarah (expiation) for this? May Allah reward you with the best!

A: If a person takes an oath while angry, there are some details:

If a person takes an oath while extremely angry so that they lose their mind and become wildly agitated to the extent that there is a loss of control, the oath does not take effect and requires nothing; just as if a man divorces his wife in a state of uncontrollable anger. The same applies to cases of verbal abuse, severe disputes, etc. in which one is furious and behaves madly.

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As for normal anger, it does not prevent Talaq (divorce pronounced by a husband) or oath from taking effect. For example, if a person swears by Allah not to speak to someone or visit them while being angry, but not to the extent of losing control and cannot thinking, and they break this oath, Kaffarah is required in this case. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴿Whenever you take an oath to do something and later you find that something else is better than the first, then do the better one and offer Kaffarah for your oath.﴾ For instance, if a person takes an oath not to visit or speak to someone even if he is angry and after that he visits or speaks to him, Kaffarah is required. This applies to both men and women according to the above-mentioned authentic Hadith in which the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴿Whenever you take an oath to do something and later you find that something else is better than the first, then do the better one and offer Kaffarah for your oath.﴾

Also, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴿By Allah, In sha'a Allah (if Allah wills), if I ever take an oath to do something and then I find something else better than the first, I will offer Kaffarah for my oath and do what is best.﴾

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71- Ruling on taking an oath when losing one's temper

Q: Is it obligatory for a person who loses his temper and takes an oath but later breaks it to offer Kaffarah (expiation) for breaking the oath? If so, how can he do so?

A: If a person swears to do something but does not fulfill the oath, they should offer Kaffarah for it. For example, if a person says, "By Allah! I will talk to so and so", "By Allah! I will visit so and so," "By Allah! I will pray such and such," and so on, but they do not fulfill their oath, then they should offer Kaffarah if they are sane and aware of what they say. However, if a person is extremely angry and is not aware of what they say, then the oath is nullified because being aware of what one says is a must to fulfill an oath. When a person gets extremely angry, they become unconscious of what they say. Therefore, it is not obligatory for such a person to offer Kaffarah, as in this case they take the same ruling of the person who is insane or one who is asleep.

The person in question may quit what he swore to do, if the interest necessitates so, and offer Kaffarah for the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾Whenever you take an oath to do something and later you find that something else is better than the first, then do the better one and offer Kaffarah for your oath.﴿ (Agreed upon by Imams Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

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If a person swears not to visit so and so, then he discovers that it is much better to visit him, he should visit him and offer Kaffarah for his oath.

There is nothing wrong with offering the Kaffarah before breaking the oath or delaying it. May Allah grant us success!

72 - A question on taking an evil oath

Q: Our Muslim brother asks: A dispute erupted between me and my wife, because we have no children and I said to her while in complete control of my faculties: "I will denounce Islam, if I do not marry another woman. After that, the relationship improved and she became pregnant; causing me to change my mind about marrying. What is the expiation for this oath?

A: This is an evil oath which a Muslim must never take or even utter. You must repent to Allah for true repentance erases past sins and you need not pay a penance.

73- Breaking the oath

Q: One day, a person who is close to me provoked me saying, "you are going to marry from the family of so and so". I then said, "By Allah, if there were no girls on earth except from this family, I would not marry them." Years passed, and I married from this family, indeed. I now lead a happy life, but I would like to know what I should do regarding my past oath.

A: If the case is as you mentioned, you must pay Kaffarah (expiation) for an oath, which is feeding ten needy people, clothing them or emancipating a believing bondsman. Feeding should be half a Sa` i.e. approximately 1.5 kg, each of the common foods in the country, whether dates, wheat, or the like. Clothing should be what is appropriate for offering Salah (Prayer) in , such as a Qamis (long shirt), an Izar (garment worn below the waist) or a Rida' (garment worn around the upper part of the body). If you are unable to feed the people, clothe them, or emancipate a believing bondsman, you must observe Sawm (fast) for three days according to Allah's statement (Glorified be He), ﴾Allâh will not punish you for what is unintentional in your oaths, but He will punish you for your deliberate oaths; for its expiation feed ten Masâkîn (poor persons), on a scale of the average of that with which you feed your own families, or clothe them or manumit a slave. But whosoever cannot afford (that), then he should fast for three days. That is the expiation for the oaths when you have sworn. And protect your oaths (i.e. do not swear much).﴿

74- The ruling on a person who takes an oath and breaks it

Q: If I swore that someone would not do something, but he did it, and I have no authority to force him, what should I do? Please advise, may Allah bless you!

A: If a person makes an oath and then breaks it, they must expiate for that oath, according to the statement of the Prophet (peace be upon him) in the Sahih (authentic) Hadith, ﴾By Allah, if I ever take an oath to do something and then I find something else better than it, I will make Kaffarah (expiation) for my oath and do what is best.﴿ He (peace be upon him) also stated, ﴾If a person takes an oath and later on finds something better, they should do the better choice and expiate for the oath taken.﴿ Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) states, ﴾Allâh will not punish you for what is unintentional in your oaths, but He will punish you for your deliberate oaths; for its expiation feed ten Masâkîn (poor persons)﴿

If you make an oath saying "By Allah, have lunch with me"; "By Allah, eat this" or "By Allah, take this sum of money" and they refuse, you have to pay Kaffarah for an oath, which is feeding ten

needy people, clothing them, or emancipating a believing bondsman. If you are not able to do this, you must observe Sawm (fast) for three days, according to Allah's statement (Glorified and Exalted be He), ﴾but He will punish you for your deliberate oaths; for its expiation feed ten Masâkîn (poor persons), on a scale of the average of that with which you feed your own families, or clothe them or manumit a slave. But whosoever cannot afford (that), then he should fast for three days. That is the expiation for the oaths when you have sworn. And protect your oaths (i.e. do not swear much).﴿

You must refrain from swearing unless there is a necessity. If you swear that someone should eat this dinner, accept this help, or do so and so, and that person refuses, you must expiate for your oath.

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75- If an oath was taken regarding several similar matters, will a single expiation suffice for all of them?

Q: What is the expiation of breaking an oath? Should the types of expiation observed in order? If I make an oath on a single matter several times, is it sufficient to offer a single expiation or should there be an expiation for each oath? Please, advise. May Allah reward you!

A: The expiation for an oath is feeding ten needy people from the staple food of one's family, clothing them or freeing a bondsman; and whoever cannot afford any of these options may fast three days. The first three choices: feedings, clothing and manumission are left for the decision of person but the fourth choice of Sawm (fasting) is only permissible when a person unable to observe any of the first three choices. The obligatory amount of feeding the needy is half a Sa` such as the Sa` of the Prophet (peace be upon him), which equals (1.5 kilo) from the staple food of the country such as dried dates, wheat, barley, etc. As for clothing, it may be a mantle, loincloth, or any garment suitable to perform Salah in. As for emancipation, it is to free a believing bondsman, male or female. If the oath was taken regarding several things of the same type, it is enough to offer a single expiation. For example, when saying: "By Allah,

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I will not speak to so and so and do so repeatedly. It is enough to offer one expiation if he talks to the person. However, if the sworn upon things are several, the expiation is multiple according to the number of things sworn upon such as to say: By Allah, I will not speak to so and so; by Allah I will not visit so and so; and By Allah, I will not travel, then if one breaks the oaths, one must expiate for each oath separately. Allah stated in Surah Al-Ma'idah: ﴾Allâh will not punish you for what is unintentional in your oaths, but He will punish you for your deliberate oaths; for its expiation feed ten Masâkîn (poor persons), on a scale of the average of that with which you feed your own families, or clothe them or manumit a slave. But whosoever cannot afford (that), then he should fast for three days. That is the expiation for the oaths when you have sworn. And protect your oaths (i.e. do not swear much). Thus Allâh make clear to you His Ayât (proofs, evidence, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) that you may be grateful.﴿ It is best to fast consecutively in order to reconcile the different opinions on this issue. If one fasts these days separately, it will suffice, as Allah (He may be Glorified) did not fix certain days or state that they should be consecutive. This is a great bounty from Allah and a blessing from Him to His servants. All praise and thanks are due to Him! May Allah grant us success!

76- Should multiple Kaffarahs be offered, if swearing is repeated on different things?

Q: If one makes many oaths, is it enough to offer one Kaffarah (expiation) for them all?

A: If the oaths are made for one matter, it is enough to make one Kaffarah, such as saying "By Allah, I will not speak to so and so" many times and then talking to that person. However, if oaths are made for a number of matters, one must offer Kaffarah for each of them, such as saying, "By Allah, I will not speak to so and so"; "By Allah, I will not visit so and so" or "By Allah, I will not travel to that country", then one does. In this case, there is a Kaffarah for each oath. May Allah grant us all success!

The Kaffarah for breaking one's oath

Q: Many people misunderstand what is a valid Kaffarah (expiation) of an oath. Would you please clarify it for us? May Allah reward you with the best!

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A: Allah has explained the Kaffarah of an oath in the Qur'an in His Statement: (Allâh will not punish you for what is unintentional in your oaths, but He will punish you for your deliberate oaths; for its expiation feed ten Masâkîn (poor persons), on a scale of the average of that with which you feed your own families, or clothe them or manumit a slave. But whosoever cannot afford (that), then he should fast for three days. That is the expiation for the oaths when you have sworn. And protect your oaths (i.e. do not swear much).) This is the Qur'anic text, which states that the Kaffarah of an oath is offered by feeding ten needy persons, clothing them, or emancipating a bondsman. The matter is flexible, for if one likes, they can feed ten needy persons, clothe them, or emancipate a bondsman if possible. Feeding is by giving half a Sa` (1 Sa` = 2.172 kg) for each person, or bringing them a dinner or supper meal. As for clothing them, it consists of an upper garment and an Izar (garment worn below the waist) or a shirt. However, if one is unable to offer any of this, one may fast for three days.

78- It is precautionary to observe Sawm of three days consecutively as a Kaffarah for breaking oath

This letter is from `Abdul-`Aziz ibn `Abdullah ibn Baz to the respected brother M.M. H., may Allah guide him! As-salamu `alaikum warahmatullah wabarakatuh (May Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you!)

In reference to your question registered at the Departments of Scholarly Research and Ifta', no. 1745, dated 25/4/ 1408 A.H., in which you inquire about several issues, the following is my reply:

Scholars hold different views with regard to observing Sawm (Fast) consecutively for the Kaffarah (expiation) of breaking an oath. To be in the safe side, it is better to observe Sawm consecutively. It should be noted that one should not observe Sawm unless he is unable to feed or clothe ten needy persons or free a Muslim bondsman as it is explained in the enclosed Fatwa (legal opinion issued by a qualified Muslim scholar). Please find attached a copy of the Fatwa issued by the Permanent Committee for Scholarly Research and Ifta' on these issues you have inquired about. In sha'a-Allah (if Allah wills), this will suffice. May Allah guide everyone to what Pleases Him! As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh!

Chairman of the Departments of Scholarly Research, Ifta', Da`wah, and Guidance

79- Ruling on delaying feeding the poor as a Kaffarah

Q: The Kaffarah (expiation) of an oath is to feed ten needy persons; is it permissible to feed one needy person now and the other after a week and so on. At times there may not be ten needy persons in the same place and same time? If I feed one needy person ten times, will this suffice for feeding ten needy persons?

A: The ten needy persons should be sought, for feeding one person repeatedly will not suffice, since they must be ten persons as Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) states in His Noble Book in Surah Al-Ma'idah: ﴾Allâh will not punish you for what is unintentional in your oaths, but He will punish you for your deliberate oaths; for its expiation feed ten Masâkîn (poor persons), on a scale of the average of that with which you feed your own families, or clothe them or manumit a slave.﴿ Therefore, you should seek to feed ten needy persons even if this happens throughout several days. However, this should be done as soon as you can, and it is permissible to feed them irregularly throughout the days, but you should exert a greater effort to find ten people and hasten to offer the Kaffarah, by clothing them by garments in which they can perform the Salah (Prayer), or provide them with a lunch or a dinner meal. This will be sufficient to fulfill what is prescribed in the mentioned Ayah (Qur'anic verse).

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80- Impermissibility of observing Sawm before feeding the needy persons

Q: If a person swears not to do something but one day he does it, should he observe Sawm (Fast) for three days and continue doing this thing? After offering Kaffarah (expiation), should he give up doing this thing again?

A: If a person swears not to do something and then does it, Kaffarah must be offered for breaking an oath. For instance, if a person says: "By Allah! I will not talk to so and so" or "I will never eat from his food"; then later he talks to him or eats from his food, Kaffarah becomes due. Allah (Glorified be He) states: ﴾Allâh will not punish you for what is unintentional in your oaths, but He will punish you for your deliberate oaths; for its expiation feed ten Masâkîn (poor persons), on a scale of the average of that with which you feed your own families, or clothe them or manumit a slave. But whosoever cannot afford (that), then he should fast for three days. That is the expiation for the oaths when you have sworn. And protect your oaths (i.e. do not swear much). Thus Allâh make clear to you His Ayât (proofs, evidence, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) that you may be grateful.﴿ In this Ayah (Qur'anic verse), Allah (Glorified be He) explains the Kaffarah for breaking an oath. He (Glorified and Exalted be He) states that it is permissible for one who is unable to feed or clothe ten people or free a Muslim bondsman to observe Sawm. Scholars hold different views with regard to the amount that should be given to a needy person. The correct view is half a Sa` (1 Sa` = 2.172 kg) of staple food such as rice, dates, etc.

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This is approximately one and a half kilo. It is sufficient to provide dinner or lunch to ten needy persons, provide them with clothes in which they can offer Salah in, or free a Muslim bondsman or bondmaid. If a person is unable to do these three things, it is permissible to fast three days. May Allah grant us success!

81- What should a person on whom there are many Kaffarahs do?

Q: If a one breaks many oaths and wants to offer a Kaffarah (expiation) for all of the oaths, is it permissible to give one Sa` (1 Sa` = 2.172 kg) of rice for a needy person as a Kaffarah for each oath? Is it allowable to give the Kaffarah to street beggars if one does not find other than them, and is it permissible to give each member of a poor family one Sa`?

A: It is obligatory on a person who breaks many oaths for different acts to feed ten needy persons, clothes them, or manumit a bondsman for every broken oath; provided that oaths are for different matters such as swearing not to speak to so and so, not to leave to such and such and the like. One should give each needy person half a Sa` from the staple food of the area where he lives such as dates, rice and the like, which equals

one and a half kg, or clothe them with what is suitable for performing Salah (Prayer) in. If one cannot do this, one should observe Sawm (Fast) for three days and it is better to be done successively. Allah (Exalted be He) states in Surah-Al-Ma'idah: ﴾Allâh will not punish you for what is unintentional in your oaths, but He will punish you for your deliberate oaths; for its expiation feed ten Masâkîn (poor persons), on a scale of the average of that with which you feed your own families, or clothe them or manumit a slave. But whosoever cannot afford (that), then he should fast for three days. That is the expiation for the oaths when you have sworn. And protect your oaths (i.e. do not swear much).﴿

If oaths are taken concerning one thing such as saying: "By Allah, I will not speak to so-and-so," and this is repeated many times, they are regarded as one oath and it suffices to pay one Kaffarah for them all. May Allah grant us success!

Ruling on paying money as Kaffarah instead of feeding needy persons

Q: Is it permissible to offer the Kaffarah (expiation) of an oath in money to one or more poor Muslims instead of feeding ten? How much is to be paid?

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A: Allah has stipulated the Kaffarah of an oath in His Noble Book. Therefore, none should ever transgress His Prescription. Allah (Glorified be He) states: ﴾Allâh will not punish you for what is unintentional in your oaths, but He will punish you for your deliberate oaths; for its expiation feed ten Masâkîn (poor persons), on a scale of the average of that with which you feed your own families, or clothe them or manumit a slave. But whosoever cannot afford (that), then he should fast for three days. That is the expiation for the oaths when you have sworn. And protect your oaths (i.e. do not swear much).﴿ He (Glorified and Exalted be He) has explained the types of Kaffarah to be offered, thus, we should not violate that. It is insufficient to give foodstuff, money, or the like to only one Miskeen (needy). Rather, as stipulated in the Ayah (Qur'anic verse), they should be ten. Each one should be given half a Sa` (1 Sa` = 2.172 kg), which approximately equals one and a half kilo of any local staple food such as dates, rice, wheat or the like. They can also be provided with a dinner or supper meal either in groups or individually, on the condition that they are ten persons. You can also clothe each one of them with one garment in which they can offer Salah (Prayer), such as an upper garment and Izar (garment worn below the waist) or a shirt. Another alternative is to emancipate a believing bondsman, but if you cannot give any of the above; you must observe Sawm (Fast) for three days. This is the Kaffarah prescribed by Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He), and it is not permissible for anyone to alter it. Further, if a person feeds them individually on separate days,

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this is all permissible, for it is not obligatory to feed them all at one time. Also, it is permissible to distribute the Kaffarah, whether food or clothes among two or three households as long as the number equals ten.

83- Ruling on offering Kaffarah for oath in the form of money

Q: My mother has to pay Kaffarah (expiation) for breaking an oath. Is it permissible for me to pay the value of feeding ten needy persons to a charitable organization? If it is permissible, how much should I pay in Saudi Riyals? Please advise, may Allah reward you!

A: If your mother asked you to pay the Kaffarah on her behalf, you are to pay the Kaffarah in the form of food not money, according to the Qur'an and the Sunnah. It is Wajib (obligatory) to pay half a Sa` (1 Sa` = 2.172 kg) of the staple food of your country such as dates, wheat, etc. Half a Sa` is approximately one and a half kilograms. It is permissible for you to provide lunch or dinner to ten needy persons, or clothe them with a garment that suits performing Salah (Prayer) in it as a Qamis (long shirt) or Rida' (garment worn around the upper part of the body), and Izar (garment worn below the waist).

84- Ruling on paying Kaffarah for an oath to Mujahids

Q: I offered 100 Riyals as Kaffarah (expiation) for an oath and put it in an account for supporting the Afghani Mujahids (strivers/fighters in the Cause of Allah). Does this replace feeding ten Miskeen (needy) persons? Kindly, provide us with a Fatwa (legal opinion issued by a qualified Muslim scholar) in this regard, may Allah reward you with the best!

A: The money you paid does not fulfill the Kaffarah for an oath as doing so comes in contradiction to the explicit text of Allah's saying in Surah Al-Ma'idah: ﴾Allâh will not punish you for what is unintentional in your oaths, but He will punish you for your deliberate oaths; for its expiation feed ten Masâkîn (poor persons), on a scale of the average of that with which you feed your own families, or clothe them or manumit a slave. But whosoever cannot afford (that), then he should fast for three days. That is the expiation for the oaths when you have sworn.﴿ May Allah grant us success!

85- Issue on Kaffarah for an oath

Q: Is it permissible to pay Kaffarah (expiation) in money for the Mujahids (those fighting in the Cause of Allah), since they are in dire need of money and the poor and needy persons in my country are few?

A: The Kaffarah for an oath should be paid as Allah stated for feeding ten needy persons or clothing them or freeing a bondsman. This is the Kaffarah for an oath, and you should not give it to the Mujahids, unless to ten needy persons among them. There is nothing wrong with giving it to ten needy Mujahids, but it is not permissible to send it to them for what is meant is to distribute it in terms of food or clothes to ten needy persons. Otherwise, if you cannot do this, you may observe Sawm (Fast) for three days.

860- A question on Kaffarah for an oath

Q: Is it permissible to provide Iftar (breaking the Fast) and dinner for ten fasting people instead of offering Kaffarah (expiation) for an oath or should I give it? Please bear in mind that the cost of Iftar and dinner is more expensive than the Kaffarah. May Allah reward you with the best!

A: If a person who should offer Kaffarah for an oath provides Iftar and dinner for ten poor persons, this would be sufficient as Kaffarah provided that he intends that as Kaffarah. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾The reward of deeds depends upon the intentions and anyone will get the reward according to what they intended.﴿ (Agreed upon by Imams Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

87- Offering Kaffarah for an oath before breaking it is permissible

Q: Is it permissible to offer Kaffarah (expiation) for an oath before breaking it?

A: It is permissible to offer Kaffarah for an oath before or after breaking it. The Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: (If anyone of you takes an oath and then finds a better option, they should offer Kaffarah for the oath (broken) and do what is best.) This Hadith generally refers to the fact that Kaffarah can be offered before or after breaking the oath.

88- Unintentional oaths

Q: When talking, I often use the word (by Allah) a lot. Is this considered an oath? How should I expiate for breaking it?

A: If a Muslim who reaches the age of Taklif (meeting the conditions holding one legally accountable for actions) repeatedly and intentionally swears by Allah to do/quit doing something, such as to swear by Allah not to visit/visit someone, then breaks the oath;

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Kaffarah (expiation) of an oath is due, which entails feeding ten Masakeen (needy persons), clothing them, or emancipating a bondsman. As for feeding, it is obligatory to offer half a Sa`(1 Sa` = 2.172 kg) of any local staple food such as Tamr (dried dates), rice or the like. This quantity is equivalent to approximately one and a half kilos. Clothing is fulfilled by giving any garment with which a person can offer Salah (Prayer), such as a shirt or a garment and Izar (garment worn below the waist). If a person is unable to offer any of these three alternatives, they must fast for three days, for Allah (Glorified be He) states: ﴿Allâh will not punish you for what is unintentional in your oaths, but He will punish you for your deliberate oaths; for its expiation feed ten Masâkîn (poor persons), on a scale of the average of that with which you feed your own families, or clothe them or manumit a slave. But whosoever cannot afford (that), then he should fast for three days. That is the expiation for the oaths when you have sworn. And protect your oaths (i.e. do not swear much).﴾ However, if the oath is unintentionally taken, it does not count and there is no Kaffarah for it, according to the noble Ayah (Qur'anic verse) in which Allah (Glorified be He) states: ﴿Allâh will not punish you for what is unintentional in your oaths﴾ Furthermore, one Kaffarah suffices for repeated oaths, if they are taken for one action as previously mentioned.

On the other hand, if several oaths are taken for several actions; a Kaffarah is to be offered for each oath, such as swearing to visit, not to speak to, hit

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someone and the like. If any similar oaths are broken, a person must offer Kaffarah. If they break them all, they are to expiate for each oath. May Allah grant us success!

89- Kaffarah is not due when no oath is taken

Q: I am a young man who made a promise to Allah that I would read a certain number of pages from the abridged Tafsir (exegesis of the meanings of the Qur'an) of Ibn Kathir each day, but I did not fulfill such promise. The time-period for the promise has elapsed. What must I do?

A: You must try your best to read from the book as you promised. In case you fall short on some days, you should repent to Allah. You do not have to offer kaffarah (expiation) so long as you did not swear an oath. However, if you made this promise in words that imply an oath such as saying "By Allah", you must offer Kaffarah, as Allah (Glorified be He) stated in Surah (Qur'anic chapter) Al-Ma'idah: ﴾Allâh will not punish you for what is unintentional in your oaths, but He will punish you for your deliberate oaths; for its expiation feed ten Masâkîn (poor persons), on a scale of the average of that with which you feed your own families, or clothe them or manumit a slave. But whosoever cannot afford (that), then he should fast for three days. That is the expiation for the oaths when you have sworn. And protect your oaths (i.e. do not swear much). Thus Allâh make clear to you His Ayât (proofs, evidence, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) that you may be grateful.﴿

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Ruling on repeating oaths to do one thing

Q: I am a young man who swore an oath by Allah more than three times to repent of a prohibited act. As I did not fulfill my oath, do I have to make one or three Kaffarahs (expiations)? What is such Kaffarah?

A: You have only to make one Kaffarah (expiation). The Kaffarah is to feed ten Miskin (needy) persons, clothe them, or to emancipate a believing bondsman. If you are unable to do any of these options, you must observe Sawm (Fast) for three days. A proof for the foregoing is Allah's statement: (Allâh will not punish you for what is unintentional in your oaths, but He will punish you for your deliberate oaths; for its expiation feed ten Masâkîn (poor persons), on a scale of the average of that with which you feed your own families, or clothe them or manumit a slave. But whosoever cannot afford (that), then he should fast for three days. That is the expiation for the oaths when you have sworn. And protect your oaths (i.e. do not swear much).)

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(Surah 'Qur'anic chapter' Al-Ma'idah). It is thus evident that one Kaffarah is sufficient for repeated oaths on doing or abandoning one thing, so long as Kaffarah was not made when the first of the oaths was broken. However, if after making Kaffarah for an oath a person repeats the same act and breaks his second oath, it will be obligatory to make another Kaffarah. The same will apply if a person takes an oath to the same effect for the third time then breaks it.

Conversely, when a person takes different oaths on doing or abandoning different things; they have to make a Kaffarah for breaking each oath. For example, if one says: "By Allah, I will not speak to so-and-so; by Allah I will not eat from the food they offer to me; by Allah I will not travel to that place". These oaths may also be in the affirmative formula by saying, for example,: "By Allah, I will speak to so-and-so; by Allah I will beat them; and the like".

It is worth mentioning that feeding one Miskin person is to give them half a Sa` (i.e. 1.5. kg) of the staple food of the country. However, offering lunch or dinner to them is sufficient based on the general meaning of the glorious Ayah (Qur'anic verse) mentioned above. On the other hand, clothing a Miskin person is to provide for them clothes that they can use for performing Salah (Prayer) such as a Qamis (long shirt) or an Izar (garment worn below the waist) and a Rida' (garment worn around the upper part of the body). May Allah grant us success!

91- Ruling on swearing oaths frequently

Q: It is my habit that I swear oaths whenever I get angry or upset at work or home and I do this for any reason. Thus, I say: "My wife will be considered divorced or unlawful to me if so and so..." I repeat such oaths continuously in the daytime and at night. I tried to stop this habit but in vain. What should I do? Also, what is the ruling on such oaths?

A: I advise you to avoid taking a lot of oaths. You should not make it a habit to take oaths. Moreover, you must stop taking an oath of Talaq (divorce) and making your wife unlawful to you. This is my advice to you. However, if you take such oaths while the condition is not met, you do not have to make any Kaffarah (expiation). For example, if you say: "My wife is considered divorced if so-and-so has not traveled" or: "My wife is considered divorced if I did such-and-such a thing," while you are truthful about what you say, and so the condition is not met, you do not have to make any Kaffarah. Likewise, if you say, for example: "My wife will be considered unlawful to me if I do such-and-such" and you do not do it, or "My wife will be considered unlawful to me if so-and-so has not traveled", or "My wife will be considered unlawful to me if I have eaten such-and-such," while you are truthful, and so the condition is not met, you do not have to make any Kaffarah. On the other hand, if you say such oaths while you intend to prevent someone from doing something such as telling your wife: "You will be considered divorced if you visit your family" while you do not intend

to divorce but only to prevent your wife from visiting her family, this comes under the same ruling as breaking an oath i.e. you have to make Kaffarah for breaking an oath, according to the more correct of the two opinions held by scholars. Likewise, if you say: "My wife will be considered unlawful to me if I eat this or if I visit so-and-so," intending only to refrain from eating that particular food or visiting that particular person, but then you eat the same food or visit the same person, you have to make Kaffarah for breaking an oath. Moreover, you have to make Istighfar (seeking forgiveness from Allah) for taking an oath to make your wife unlawful to you, because forbidding something that Allah (Exalted be He) has made lawful is not permissible.

92- Issue on repeated oaths

Brother S.`A.H.M., visited me at the Glorious Qur'an Memorization Society in Ta'if on Monday corresponding to 1/22/1419 A.H. He mentioned that a big dispute arose between him and his brothers concerning a grocery store that they used to work in. The reason for such dispute was that their father gave the grocery store to two of them and deprived the rest. The questioner claimed to have a due share in the grocery store. Therefore, he got extremely angry, swore repeated oaths, and declared repeatedly that his wife will be considered divorced and unlawful to him if he enters his brother's homes unless all brothers share the grocery. He thus said more than one time: "By Allah! I will not enter my brothers' homes until

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we all share the grocery store", "My wife will be considered divorced if I enter their homes unless we all share the grocery store", "My wife will be considered unlawful to me if I enter their homes unless we all share the grocery store." He mentioned that he repeated this whenever he was asked to visit his brothers.

He stated the foregoing in the presence of his father-in-law. Moreover, he brought two witnesses who witnessed that what he mentioned was all that they heard him saying as they were trying to bring about reconciliation between him and his brothers. He said that after he had decided not to visit his brothers, his father acted similarly and became angry saying: "I will not enter your home unless you withdraw your decision and enter your brothers' homes." The questioner says: "Now I wish to satisfy my father lest I should otherwise become undutiful to him. I now want to enter my brothers' homes, but how can I avoid the harmful consequences of the repeated oaths of divorce and making my wife unlawful to me that I swore?" May Allah grant you success, preserve and reward you with the best for supporting Islam and the Muslims! As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh (May Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you!)

Wa `alaikum as-salamu warahmatullah wabarakatuh (May Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you too!). To proceed: Based on the manner of divorce, the way that the concerned husband made his wife unlawful to him, and the oaths that he , i.e. the questioner swore not to enter his brothers' homes unless they share the grocery store,

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and his visit to me and answering my questions regarding his intention that did not intend to divorce his wife, rather he intended to refrain from entering his brothers' homes until he shares in the grocery store with them or that they give it back to their father; I answered him that he must offer a Kaffarah (expiation) for all the oaths mentioned above as they all were sworn on one thing. This is the proper of the two views of scholars. Accordingly, the divorce and the unlawfulness mentioned above are of no effect. This is because the Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: ﴾Acts are to be judged by intentions and every person will get their reward according to what they have intended.﴿

It is worth mentioning that it is permissible for the husband in question to enter his brothers' homes before making the Kaffarah and after making it. However, it is better that he hastens and offers the Kaffarah first. This is because the Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: ﴾Whoever takes an oath and then finds a better option is to expiate for their 'broken' oath and do what is best.﴿ Finally, I hope that you inform all the concerned parties of this Fatwa (legal opinion issued by a qualified Muslim scholar). May Allah guide us all to whatever pleases Him! As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh.

93- Issue on repeated oaths

Q: I swore by Allah several times and I am not sure how many exactly they are. In any case, I think I swore three times to do something but I did not. What is the ruling on this and what is the Kaffarah (expiation) that I must offer? May Allah reward you with the best!

A: If a Muslim swears three oaths or more to do one thing then they do not do it during the appointed time, they will have to offer only one kaffarah as repetition is considered one oath. An example of this is that a person says repeatedly: "By Allah! I will break up with so-and-so today." Conversely, if a Muslim swears different oaths to do different things then they do not do them; they have to offer Kaffarahs (expiations) for the equivalent number of the oaths that they swore. An example of this is that a person swears an oath to visit so-and-so on day so, to speak to so-and-so on day so, and to give so-and-so such and such on days such and such then they do not fulfill their oaths. If they doubt the number of such oaths, they have to estimate the number that they deem most likely to be true. Allah (Glorified be He) states: ﴾So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can﴿ May Allah grant us success!

94- Issue on the distribution of Kaffarah for an oath

Q: The questioner from Al-Mukhawwah in Al-Bahah asks: Someone gave me one hundred Saudi riyals to buy (food for) a Kaffarah (expiation) and distribute it on his behalf. I thus bought food stuff for ninety riyal, divided it into two halves, and gave each half one person. I kept the remaining change of ten riyals. One week later, I bought some food with the remaining money and gave it to one of the two persons between whom I divided the food that I bought the first time; bearing in mind that both persons were in dire need of the food. My question is whether what I did is sufficient? Provide me with your beneficial answer please so that I become discharged of this responsibility! May Allah reward you with the best!

A: If the Kaffarah is for an oath, food has to be distributed amongst ten Faqirs (poor persons). Feeding two persons only is not sufficient for Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) states in Surah (Qur'anic chapter) Al-Ma'idah: ﴿Allâh will not punish you for what is unintentional in your oaths, but He will punish you for your deliberate oaths; for its expiation feed ten Masâkîn (poor persons), on a scale of the average of that with which you feed your own families, or clothe them or manumit a slave. But whosoever cannot afford (that), then he should fast for three days. That is the expiation for the oaths when you have sworn. And protect your oaths (i.e. do not swear much).﴾

Accordingly, it is Wajib (obligatory) upon the person who asked you to buy and distribute

the Kaffarah on his behalf to feed eight more Faqirs besides the two persons to whom you gave food. However, in case that the person in question has already ordered you to distribute the food amongst ten Faqirs and he does not forgive your mistake; you are to pay the value of the Kaffarah yourself by feeding each one of the remaining Faqirs half a Sa`(1 Sa` = 2.172 kg) of the staple food of the area where you live be it dates, wheat, etc. This is because you have contradicted his command. May Allah grant us all success!

95- Ruling on promising and then breaking the promise

A: I and another person promised to quit smoking narghile, but we broke our promise. Have we committed a sin?

A: You should perform Tawbah (repentance to Allah) and beware of smoking narghile, because it is destructive and harmful, and you should never return to it again. If you swore not to smoke it again, you have to make Kaffarah (expiation) for an oath.

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96- Ruling on making vows to other than Allah

Q: I had a problem, so I made a vow to one of the Imams. But, now I learned that it is not permissible to make vows to other than Allah. In addition, the Imam is far away from me. Is it permissible to pay this vow to the poor or to offer Kaffarah (expiation)?

A: This vow is Batil (null and void), because it is an act of worship to other than Allah. You must repent to Allah, turn to Him, seek His Forgiveness, and regret this sin. Vowing is an act of worship. Allah (Exalted be He) states: ﴿And whatever you spend for spendings (e.g., in Sadaqah - charity for Allâh's Cause) or whatever vow you make, be sure Allâh knows it all.﴾ i.e. Allah will reward you for this. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴿Anyone who vows to obey Allah should obey Him, and anyone who vows to disobey Allah should not disobey Him.﴾ The vow which you made to one of the deceased Imams is invalid and it is an act of Shirk (associating others in worship with Allah).

It is not permissible to make any vows except to Allah alone because it is an act of worship. Therefore, Salah (Prayer), sacrifice, vows, Sawm (Fast), and supplications should all be dedicated to Allah Alone.

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Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) stays: ﴿You (Alone) we worship, and You (Alone) we ask for help (for each and everything).﴾ And: ﴿And your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him.﴾ This is an order to worship Him Alone, He (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴿So, call you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم and the believers) upon (or invoke) Allâh making (your) worship pure for Him (Alone) (by worshipping none but Him and by doing religious deeds sincerely for Allâh's sake only and not to show off and not to set up rivals with Him in worship), however much the disbelievers (in the Oneness of Allâh) may hate (it).﴾ And: ﴿so invoke not anyone along with Allâh.﴾ Acts of worship should be dedicated to Allah alone; vowing, Sawm (Fast), Salah (Prayer), supplicating, and offering sacrifices are all acts of worship that must be dedicated to Allah Alone. Therefore, the vow that you have made is Batil (null and void), and you do not have to give anything to the poor or anyone else. You have to repent to Allah. You are not required to fulfill this vow, because it is invalid and an act of Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship). All you have to do is to sincerely repent to Allah and do good deeds. May Allah guide you to what pleases Him and help you to repent sincerely!

97- Ruling on fulfilling vows

Q: I made a vow to Allah that if He healed my sick daughter I would slaughter a sheep for His sake. Now she is healed, praise be to Allah, so is it permissible for me to pay the price of the sheep, as some poor persons prefer the money? Clarify this for me, may Allah bless you!

A: It is obligatory on you to fulfill your vow by slaughtering the sheep and giving it in charity for the poor hoping to please Allah and obey Him by fulfilling your vow. The Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: ﴾Whoever vows that he will be obedient to Allah, should remain obedient to Him; and whoever makes a vow that he will disobey Allah, should not disobey Him."﴿ This Hadith was related by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih on the authority of Um Al-Mu'minun `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her). It does not suffice to pay the price of the sheep in charity but it is obligatory to slaughter a sheep in accordance with your vow, then if you intent to eat from it and your family and invite your neighbors and relatives to eat from it, you are allowed to do so and you are not required to give it to the poor. The Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: ﴾Deeds are judged according to the intentions behind them and every person will get the reward according to what he has intended.﴿ (Agreed upon by Imams Al-Bukhari and Muslim) We recommend that you do not make vows because the Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: ﴾Do not take vows, for a vow has no effect against fate;

it is only from the miserly that something is extracted.﴿ This is an agreed upon Hadith by Imam Al-Bukhari and Muslim that is reported on the authority of `Abdullah ibn `Umar ibn Al-Kattab (may Allah be pleased with both of them). Allah is the One Who brings success.

98- Fulfilling vows according to intentions

Q: I made a vow that if Allah gave me of His bounty, I would dedicate a sum of money to establish a Masjid (mosque). I decided to dedicate a certain sum of money that would have been enough to establish a Masjid at that time. Years passed by, and my dream was achieved, thanks to Allah. I want to fulfill my vow now.

What happened is that the value of the sum of money I expected to have is less nowadays and it is not enough to establish a Masjid. Thus, this sum of money will not achieve this purpose because of the decline in the value of the currency in these days. I am thinking of giving this sum of money as a Sadaqah (voluntary charity) to the poor and the needy, whether relatives or strangers, or to a charitable institution to help in completing an unfinished Masjid. Is it permissible to do so? Please advise, may Allah bless you!

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A: You should fulfill your vow by establishing a Masjid as much as possible. If you had intended a Masjid where the Jumu`ah (Friday) Prayer is held, you should establish it, according to the statement of the Prophet (peace be upon him): ﴾Whoever vows to be obedient to Allah should do; and whoever vows to disobey Allah should not do.﴿ (Related by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih (authentic) book of Hadith)

You should exert as much effort as possible to fulfill your vow. However, if you intended a certain sum of money, you have to pay only that, according to the statement of the Prophet (peace be upon him): ﴾The reward of deeds depends upon the intentions; every person will get the reward according to what they have intended.﴿ If you cannot establish a Masjid on your own, you may participate in building a Masjid with others, according to Allah's statement (Glorified be He): ﴾So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can﴿ May Allah facilitate your affairs and discharge you of this responsibility!

99- Ruling on fulfilling a vow of obedience

Q: My wife vowed to observe Sawm (Fast) of six days monthly, if her son got the primary certificate. Her son got this certificate one year ago. She has been observing such Sawm since that time. But she feels regret for doing so and great tiredness, because of being preoccupied with bringing up her children and looking after the affairs of her household, especially during the summer.

What is your opinion on this matter? Should she continue observing such Sawm or may she give it up and seek Allah's forgiveness for that? It may be worthy mentioning that vowed to observe Sawm on these six days so long as she is alive.

A: It is Wajib (obligatory) on your wife to fulfill her vow. This is because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: (Whoever vows to do an act of obedience to Allah, has to do it; and whoever vows to do an act of disobedience to Allah, should not disobey Him.) (Related by Al-Imam Al-Bukhari in his Sahih 'authentic' Book of Hadith). Moreover, Allah praises those who fulfill their vows by saying: (They (are those who) fulfil (their) vows, and they fear a Day whose evil will be wide-spreading.) However, there is no blame upon her to observe Sawm of these days separately in case that she did not intend to observe them successively. If she intended to observe Sawm of these six days in succession, she has to do so. We ask Allah to

help her to fulfill her vow and to grant her great reward. Besides, we advise her along with all other Muslims not to make vows again for the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: (Do not take vows, for a vow has no effect against Fate; it is only to extract something from the miserly.) (Agreed upon by Imams Al-Bukhari and Muslim). May Allah grant us success!

100- Issue on vows

Q: Once I vowed that if Allah saved me from committing a specific sin, I would gift my mother-in-law gold jewels. It is noteworthy to mention that she did not know about this. Should I give her the jewels or offer a Kaffarah (expiation) of an oath?

A: You have to fulfill your vow if the mentioned condition occurs, according to the statement of the Prophet (peace be upon him): (Anyone who vows to obey Allah, should obey Him; and whoever vows to disobey Allah, should not disobey Him.) (Related by Imam Al-Bukhari in his Sahih (authentic) book of Hadith). However, if your mother-in-law forgives you, this is acceptable, for she has the right to do this. Allah is the One Who grants success.

101- Making vows is not one of the causes of success

Q: One day before taking an exam, I vowed that I would slaughter an animal if I passed the exam and graduated from the sixth primary year to the first intermediate year. I passed the exam but in the second session exam not in the first session, must I slaughter a sheep or not? This took place four years ago and I did not fulfill my vow. Moreover, I made another similar vow if I passed the exams of the third intermediate year and moved to the first secondary year, what should I slaughter, one or two sheep?

A: If you made the vow in absolute words and did not intend passing the first session exam, you will have to fulfill your vow and slaughter an animal for the sake of Allah and give it to the poor as it is not permissible for you or your family to eat from it. The Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: ﴿Whoever vows that he will be obedient to Allah, should remain obedient to Him; and whoever made a vow that he will disobey Allah, should not disobey Him.﴾ (Related by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih on the authority of `Aishah, may Allah be pleased with her). If you intended by your vow to pass the

first session exam but did not succeed except in the second one, nothing is due on you. The Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: ﴿Deeds are judged according to the intentions behind them and every person will get the reward according to what he has intended.﴾ This Hadith is agreed upon by Al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of `Umar ibn Al-Khattab (may Allah be pleased with him). The same applies to the second vow, according to the aforementioned Hadith of `Aishah. However, if your intention in the first and second vow was to slaughter an animal for your family, relatives and neighbors, you are to abide by your intention due to the aforementioned Hadith of `Umar.

Dear brother, I exhort you not to make vows for they do not prevent Allah's predestination and that are not a cause of success. The Prophet (peace be upon him) forbade it and said: ﴿It (vow) brings no goodness; it is only from the miserly that something is extracted.﴾ This Hadith was reported the Two Sahih (authentic) Books of Hadith (i.e. Al-Bukhari and Muslim) on the authority of Ibn `Umar (may Allah be pleased with both of them). May Allah grant us and you guidance and success!

102-

Ruling on the fulfillment of vows as soon as the condition is fulfilled

Q: I made a vow to Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) to offer ten Rak`ahs (units of Prayer) if the pain in my legs subsides. Now, I do not know whether it is permissible to offer the ten Rak`ahs as two Rak`ahs every day until I finish them in five days? Or should I offer the ten Rak`ahs as a whole in one day? Kindly advise? May Allah reward you!

A: If the stipulated condition -"the relief of pain"- occurred, it is obligatory on you to fulfill your vow and perform ten Rak`ahs during the times which it is permissible to offer Salah (Prayer). Every two Rak`ahs should be performed independently with Taslim (salutation of peace ending the Prayer). The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: (The (optional) Salah during day and night should consist of pairs of Rak`ahs.) And: (Whoever vows that he will be obedient to Allah, should remain obedient to Him; and whoever makes a vow that he will disobey Allah, should not disobey Him.) (Related by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih (authentic) book of Hadiths).

103- Fulfilling a lawful vow

Q: I had a married sister who had three children. She was always arguing with her husband and her father. Her husband mistreated her, so she left the house and went to her mother. Her stepfather also treated her badly. I bought her an apartment where she could live with me, and she often used to visit her mother. One time her stepfather forced her to leave her children to her husband and she obeyed him to please her mother. One day, there was an argument between my sister and her stepfather, so she went to her apartment very upset about the calamities that had befallen her and the fact that her children are away from her. In an attempt to end her life, she swallowed some pills. I took her to the hospital just in time; however, she realized that she was about to die so she repented and began to fervently pray for forgiveness for what she had done and asked us to pray to Allah to forgive her. By Allah's Will, she passed away. What is her situation now?

Is it permissible for me to give Sadaqah (voluntary charity) and perform Hajj on her behalf? Please note that I vowed to do these things during my life in sha'a-Allah (if Allah wills).

A: So long as your sister regretted and repented to Allah for trying to commit suicide, there is the hope that she may be forgiven. Repentance wipes out what came before it, and one who repents from sin is like one who did not sin at all, as was narrated in the authentic Hadith from the Prophet (peace be upon him). If you give in Sadaqah on her behalf or ask Allah to forgive her, or make Du`a' (supplication) for her, this is good; this will benefit her and you will be rewarded.

You have to fulfill the vows you made by performing these acts of worship, and Allah has praised those who fulfill their vows. Praising the righteous, Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) states: ﴿They (are those who) fulfil (their) vows, and they fear a Day whose evil will be wide-spreading.﴾ The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴿Anyone who vows to obey Allah should obey Him, and anyone who vows to disobey Allah should not disobey Him.﴾ (Related by Imam Al-Bukhari in his Sahih (authentic) book of Hadith) Allah is the One Who grants success!

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104- What should be done by someone who is unable to fulfill a vow

Q: I am a 26-year-old man and suffer troubles that every married person may have. I have three children and a very old mother. Divine Decree prevented me from seeing them for one year and six months. I made a vow that once I return to my house and family, I will observe Sawm (Fast) for six days, slaughter two animals for the sake of Allah (Exalted be He), visit Makkah and Al-Madinah with my father and make Tawaf (circumambulation around the Ka`bah) with my mother carried on my shoulders. As the troubles ended, I slaughtered only one animal due to my financial difficulties and could not travel with my family and parents to Makkah and Madinah. Also, I am not able to observe Sawm. I fear that I fall into sin owing to breaking the vows. Thus, I send this message to you to find a solution that pleases Allah.

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A: Praise be to Allah who helped you return to your parents and children, and we ask Him (Glorified and Exalted be He) to set right all your affairs and help you do what He loves and is pleased with. It is obligatory on you to fulfill your vow as much as you can because Allah praises the believers who fulfill their vows, saying: ﴾They (are those who) fulfil (their) vows, and they fear a Day whose evil will be wide-spreading.﴿

Besides, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾Whoever vows that they will be obedient to Allah, should remain obedient to Him; and whoever makes a vow that they will disobey Allah, should not disobey Him.﴿ This Hadith was related by Imam Al-Bukhari in his Sahih (authentic) Book of Hadith on the authority of `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her). Therefore, you must slaughter the second animal once you are able to afford to buy it. This is because Allah (Glorified be He) says: ﴾Allâh burdens not a person beyond his scope.﴿ And: ﴾So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can﴿

Thus, once you have enough money to buy the second animal, you have to buy and slaughter it, then, distribute it among the poor unless you intended to eat its meat with your family. In this case, you are to be reckoned according to your intention. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾The reward

of deeds depends upon the intentions and every person will get the reward according to what he has intended...》 (Agreed upon by Al-Bukhari and Muslim). However, if you made a vow to slaughter the animals without intending to eat from their meat, you have to distribute it

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amongst the poor. Likely, you have to observe Sawm (Fast) of six days whenever you are able to do so even separately unless you intended to observe them consecutively, so you are to be reckoned according to your intention for the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: 《The reward of deeds depends upon the intentions...》 Therefore, if you intended to observe Sawm for these days consecutively, you have to do so.

You have also to take your parents to perform Hajj and visit Makkah and Al-Madinah. If you intended to make `Umrah (lesser Hajj), it should be `Umrah; if you intended to perform Hajj, it should be Hajj once you are able to do so; both depending on your intention. Allah (Exalted be He) says: 《Allâh burdens not a person beyond his scope.》 And: 《So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can》 You have to take them to Madinah as well, since making journeys to Madinah for the purpose of performing Salah (Prayer) in the Prophet's Mosque is a Sunnah (a commendable act) and an act of `Ibadah (worship). During your visit to Madinah, you should send peace on the Messenger (peace be upon him) and his two Companions. This is the best action you may do, because visiting the grave of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and the graves of his two Companions (Abu Bakr and `Umar) for those present in Madinah is permissible.

The same ruling applies to the men who travel to Madinah. It is not permissible to make journeys merely to visit the grave of the Prophet (peace be upon him); however, going on a journey to the Masjid (Mosque) and then visiting the Prophet's grave is permissible. In the Masjid, Muslims should ask Allah to bestow peace on the Prophet (peace be upon him) and

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his two Companions (may Allah be pleased with them). Women are not permitted to visit the graves; but they perform Salah in the Prophet's Masjid and ask Allah to bestow peace on him while they are in the Masjid, at their homes, or on the roads.

In addition, it is permissible for you and only the male relatives with you to visit Al-Baqi` and the graves of the martyrs. It is permissible for you and all your travelling companions, men and women, to visit Masjid Qiba' (a town near Madinah where the Prophet established the first mosque) and perform Salah in it. That is because it is a meritorious Masjid and it is recommended for the Muslim who is present in Madinah or is traveling to it to visit this Masjid and perform Salah there.

There is no blame on you to help your parents make Tawaf and Sa`y (going between Safa and Marwah during Hajj and `Umrah) while carrying them on your shoulders, particularly if they cannot walk and you are able to do that. However, if they can walk, they should themselves make Tawaf and Sa`y, and they may do Sa`y riding like other pilgrims. It is not obligatory on you to carry them due to the hardship involved; in addition to that there is no evidence on its permissibility. If you failed to carry them, you must offer an expiation of breaking an oath, which is feeding ten needy people each with one Sa` (1 Sa` = 2.172 kg) of dates, wheat or rice, or clothing them each with a suitable garment in which they can perform Salah, such as a long shirt or an Izar (garment worn below the waist) and a Rida' (garment worn around the upper part of the body). It is not obligatory on you

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to carry them; they should themselves make Tawaf and Sa`y if they are able to, as stated above.

Were they unable, you would carry them during Tawaf and Sa`y.

We ask Allah to help you fulfill your vow and accept the good deeds from us, you and all Muslims. We advise you not to make vows in the future, because the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: ﴾Do not take vows, for a vow has no effect against fate; it is only from the miser person that something is extracted.﴿ Thus, do not make vows again. When a blessing comes to you, thank Allah for it, obey and praise Him with no need to make vows. Finally, we would like to inform you that the Divine Decrees do not prevent occurrence of anything, as you said in the question; it is better to say that Allah decreed so-and-so. That is because Divine Decrees themselves do not have influence on things; it is Allah Alone Who causes everything to happen. Thus, it is preferable to say that Allah decreed or willed something for me. You should attribute all affairs to Allah (Glorified be He). Allah is the Cherisher of success.

105- Ruling on vowing to do an act of disobedience

Q: A sister from Riyadh says: In a fit of anger, I vowed to hit my son till he bleeds, but I did not. What should I do? May Allah reward you with the best!

A: Bismillah wal Hamdullilah (In the Name of Allah, all praise is due to Him). You must offer Kaffarah (expiation) for an oath, for beating is not an act that brings one close to Allah; rather, it is a matter of consideration. So if you do not do it, you must offer Kaffarah for an oath. Besides that, beating your son until he bleeds is not permissible.

The mentioned vow in this case is a vow of disobedience, which is not permissible. The Kaffarah is offered by feeding ten Masakeen (needy persons), clothing them, or emancipating a believing bondsman. If a person is unable to do any of these three things, they may fast for three days.

Feeding is done by giving each one half a Sa` (1.5 km) from the local staple food such as Tamr (dried dates), wheat, rice, etc. May Allah grant us success!

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106- Ruling on a vow made before reaching the age of puberty

Q: When I was in the preparatory stage, I made a vow to observe Sawm (Fast) on Mondays and Thursdays if I passed my exams. However, I was careless, so I did not fulfill my vow and now I am about to enter university. I have performed Tawbah (repentance to Allah) and Istighfar (seeking forgiveness from Allah) and I observe Sawm regularly on Mondays and Thursdays. Do I bear a sin for my past negligence? Is there a Kaffarah (expiation) that I should pay? Please advise.

A: If at the time of making the vow you had reached puberty by having your first menstrual period, reaching the age of fifteen, growing coarse pubic hair or ejaculation due to a sexual dream or any other way; you must fulfill this vow. A woman reaches puberty in either of four ways: reaching the age of fifteen, discharging Maniy (vaginal secretions that are released upon orgasm), growing coarse pubic hair, or menstruation. The same applies to men, of course except menstruation

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which is particular to women. If you had attained puberty in any of these ways when you made your vow, you must fulfill it observing Sawm on Mondays and Thursdays, according to the statement of the Prophet (peace be upon him): ﴾Whoever vows to be obedient to Allah should do so; and whoever vows to disobey Allah should not do.﴿ (Related by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih (authentic) Book of Hadith). You have also to make up for the days in which you did not observe Sawm.

107- The ruling on giving the vowed money to a way other than that intended

Q: If I vowed to pay five thousand pounds for the cause of Allah and this sum is enough to build a small Masjid (mosque) in my village, shall I have the reward for building this Masjid or the reward for fulfilling the vow?

A: If you vow some dirhams or the like for Allah, you must fulfill it without any change. If you say: "I must give 5000 in charity", while you mean the poor, it should be given to the poor. If your intention

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was to build a Masjid, build a Masjid or participate in building it. If your intention was to build a school for teaching the Qur'an and Hadith, or to spend it on the Mujahideen (those striving/fighting in the Cause of Allah), then do as you intended, because the Prophet (may Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon him) says: ﴾The reward of deeds depends upon the intentions and every person will get the reward according to what he has intended.﴿ (Agreed on its authenticity i.e. reported by Al-Bukhari and Muslim). It is obligatory on you to spend it in the way you intended or declared in your vow. The Prophet (may Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon him) also says: ﴾"Whoever vows that he will be obedient to Allah, should remain obedient to Him; and whoever makes a vow that he will disobey Allah, should not disobey Him."﴿ (Related by Imam Muslim in his Sahih (book of authentic Hadiths)). Allah has praised those who fulfill their vows in the Qur'an in Surah Al-Insan. Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾They (are those who) fulfil (their) vows, and they fear a Day whose evil will be wide-spreading.﴿ Allah (Exalted be He) also says: ﴾And whatever you spend for spendings (e.g., in Sadaqah - charity for Allâh's Cause) or whatever vow you make, be sure Allâh knows it all.﴿ i.e. to compensate you. So, it is obligatory on a person who makes a vow to fulfill it, whether building a school, a Masjid, giving charity, or any other charitable way.

108-

Ruling on failing to fulfill a vow due to old age and the like

Q: One of my relatives was forced to marry a man whom she does not love. She vowed that if he divorces her, she will observe Sawm (Fast) for two consecutive months. He divorced her, but she is unable to observe Sawm, what should she do?

A: She is required to observe this Sawm whenever she is able to do so. The Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: ﴾Anyone who vows to obey Allah, should obey Him.﴿ If she is able to observe it, then she has to do so; otherwise, she will be indebted for it. If she failed to observe it because she grew old, she must feed for each day one Miskeen (needy), which is the same ruling applied to whomever fails to observe Sawm of the month of Ramadan or some of its days due to old age or a chronic disease.

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109- Ruling on fulfilling a vow outside the place specified in the vow

Q: I made a vow that if Allah were to drive the Russians out of Afghanistan, I would build a Masjid (mosque) there. Praise is due to Allah, the Russians withdrew, but at the present time I cannot fulfill my vow because of the increasing problems, troubles, and killing that continues till now in spite of the end of war. Now, is it permissible for me to build a Masjid in other Muslim country? Should I wait till conditions improve in Afghanistan, so that I can fulfill my vow in the place specified? May Allah reward you with the best!

A: In the Name of Allah, praise is due to him. May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon Allah's Messenger! You should fulfill your vow in the place you stipulated, if you can. Allah (Exalted be He) says, (So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can) The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, ("Whoever vows that he will be obedient to Allah, should remain obedient to Him; and whoever made a vow that he will disobey Allah, should not disobey Him.")

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(Related by Muslim in His Sahih) May Allah facilitate your affairs and help you fulfill your vow! He is All-Hearer, Ever Near! May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad and upon his family and Companions!

110- Ruling on he who vowed to perform Hajj but died before performing it

Q: A person vowed to perform Hajj then passed away without leaving any wealth, is it commendable or obligatory to fulfill his vow?

A: If anyone of his heirs or anyone else can offer Hajj on his behalf, this is Mustahab (desirable) and they will be greatly rewarded. However, if they cannot, there is no blame on them. Allah (Exalted be He) stated: ﴾So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can﴿ The case at hand is similar to settling a debt; if the heirs pay the deceased's debt, it is better and if they do not, there is no blame for the deceased left no wealth.

111- Should the one deputized to perform Hajj of vow begin from the Miqat specified by the vower

Q: When a proxy lives in a town other than that of the vower, should he start Hajj from the town of the vower?

A: It is not obligatory upon him to do so and it is sufficient to assume the state of Ihram (the beginning of Hajj and `Umrah) from Miqat (locations for starting Hajj and `Umrah) even if he lives in Makkah and enters into the state of Ihram from there, this is acceptable because Makkah is the Miqat for its residents.

112- Vows are not for something that is obligatory

A woman became ill, so she said: "For the Sake of Allah, if I recuperate, I will never miss offering Salah (Prayer)." She later recovered, but she did not fulfill what she said. She does not realize the meaning of her saying: "For the Sake of Allah," if it is an oath or a vow. After a period of time, she repented and asks about the Kaffarah (expiation) that she has to offer?

A: All praise be to Allah that she repented, for Salah is an obligation even if she did not make a vow. Salah is the pillar of Islam and abandoning it is Kufr (disbelief). The Prophet

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(peace be upon him) stated: ﴾The peak of the matter is Islam and its pillar is Salah.﴿ And: ﴾The difference between us and them (disbelievers) is Salah. Whoever neglects it commits Kufr.﴿ Vow is made for assertion. If the questioner abandoned Salah, then repented, her Tawbah (repentance to Allah) wipes out what preceded. The Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: ﴾Tawbah wipes out all the previous misdeeds.﴿ She has to commit to her religion and keep on obeying Allah and performing Salah which Allah made obligatory and beware of the insinuations of Satan and bad company. We ask Allah to help her and us remain adherent to Al-Haqq (the Truth). She does not have to make up for what she abandoned, for not performing Salah is Kufr and the Kafir (disbeliever) needs not to make up for what was not done before embracing Islam. Allah (Exalted be He) states: ﴾Say to those who have disbelieved, if they cease (from disbelief), their past will be forgiven.﴿ The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾Islam wipes out all that has gone before it (previous misdeeds).﴿ (Related by Muslim in his Sahih (authentic) Book of Hadith)

113- Ruling on one who vows to memorize the Qur'an upon passing an exam

Q: Fifteen years ago, I vowed to Allah to memorize the Qur'an stating: "If I succeed in the exam, I will memorize the entire Qur'an". I did pass the exam and have since strived to memorize it. My question is: If I am not able to memorize it, should I offer a Kaffarah (expiation)? What should I do to fulfill my vow?

A: If the reality is as mentioned in the question, this is not a vow, rather a promise and a will. Accordingly, you can do your best to memorize the Qur'an and you do not have to offer a Kaffarah. May Allah facilitate your affairs and that of all Muslims!

114- Vows depend on intention

Q: I am a Qur'an teacher and during Ramadan I led people in the congregational Salah (Prayer). I said to myself: "If I receive money from benevolent people during this holy month, I will give it in Sadaqah (voluntary charity) for orphans." However, I received 600 Riyals but did not give them to the orphans as I vowed as I was in need of this money. What should I do?

A: If you said this to yourself without making a vow, there is nothing on you. But if you vowed to give the Sadaqah to the orphans for Allah's Sake, you must fulfill your vow. The Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: ﴾Anyone who vows to obey Allah should obey Him; and anyone vows to disobey Allah should not disobey Him.﴿ May Allah grant us success!

Book on judgment

115- Allah (Glorified be He), out of His Mercy and Benevolence, has guided the rulers of this country since the time of Imam Muhammad ibn Su`ud and during the time of the Custodian of the two Sacred Mosques to rule according to Shari`ah (Islamic law). This is one of Allah's greatest favors upon us.

All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of all the Worlds. May peace and blessings of Allah be upon the Messenger of Allah, our Prophet Muhammad ibn `Abdullah, his family, his Companions, and those who followed His guidance to the Day of Judgment!

To proceed: I thank Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) for guiding us to this brotherly meeting with the noble heads of the Shar`y (Islamic legal) courts in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. I ask Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) to bless this meeting, rectify our hearts and deeds. We ask Him for success and for guidance to that which pleases Him. We ask Him to protect us all from the causes of His wrath, severe punishment and to support His religion and raise his word (Islam). I thank my dear brother, Dr. `Abdullah ibn Muhammad Al Shaykh for gathering and inviting our brothers; the chiefs of courts

to this symposium. I ask Allah to bless him, support him in doing all what is good, forgive his father and gather him and us in the abode of dignity; paradise.

Dear scholars, one of the greatest favors of Allah upon this country is that, He guided its rulers to apply the Islamic Shari`ah since the emergence of the Islamic call by Shaykh Muhammad ibn `Abdul-Wahhab (may Allah be merciful with him) and on the hand of Imam Muhammad ibn Sa`ud (may Allah be merciful with him).

One of the greatest favors of Allah is that He guided the two Imams to apply the Islamic Shari`ah, call to His way and direct people to monotheism by devotedness to Him, fighting against evil; its means and causes, and applying Islamic Shari`ah in the cities of this Kingdom and their surroundings. This is one of the greatest favors that these two Imams, their followers and supporters combined between the call to Allah and guiding the people to the Oneness of Allah; teaching them the ordinances of Allah and warning them against what Allah has forbidden such as Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship) and its causes. They applied also the Shari`ah of Allah in regard to disputable matters which are ambiguous to them. Kings and rulers of this country successively maintained the application of Shari`ah, calling to

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tche way of Allah, guiding people to Allah's Oneness and obedience, warning them against Shirk and disobedience, and judging between them according to Shari`ah as Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) states in His Glorious Book: (And so judge (you O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) among them by what Allâh has revealed)

And (Verily, Allâh commands that you should render back the trusts to those to whom they are due; and that when you judge between men, you judge with justice.) And: (O you who believe! Stand out firmly for Allâh as just witnesses; and let not the enmity and hatred of others make you avoid justice. Be just: that is nearer to piety)

And: (But no, by your Lord, they can have no Faith, until they make you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) judge in all disputes between them, and find in themselves no resistance against your decisions, and accept (them) with full submission.) And: (Do they then seek the judgement of (the days of) Ignorance? And who is better in judgement than Allâh for a people who have firm Faith.)

And: (And whosoever does not judge by what Allâh has revealed, such are the Kâfirûn (i.e. disbelievers of a lesser degree as they do not act on Allâh's Laws).)

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(And whosoever does not judge by that which Allâh has revealed, such are the Zâlimûn (polytheists and wrong-doers - of a lesser degree).) (And whosoever does not judge by what Allâh has revealed (then) such (people) are the Fâsiqûn [the rebellious i.e. disobedient (of a lesser degree) to Allâh].)

Application of Allah's Shari`ah is one of the most important obligations. There is no way for the servants of Allah to obey Him, seek His Oneness, fulfill His due rights, set justice between the oppressed and the oppressors except with the arbitration of Shari`ah by applying the rulings of the Qur'an and the Sunnah on young and old, the select and the public in all matters without discrimination.

It is of the Mercy and Benevolence of Allah that He guided the rulers of this country, since the time of Imam Muhammad up to the rein of the custodian of the two Sacred Mosques Fahd ibn `Abdul-`Aziz, to the arbitration of Shari`ah and applying it to the people by establishing the Shar`y courts and appointing judges and chiefs. This is a great favor of Allah. We ask Allah out of His favor to guide those in charge to all what pleases Him. We ask Him also to

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support them in ruling according to Shari`ah and judging among people according to it. We ask Him also to guide them to useful knowledge, pious acts and grant us guidance and make us of those who call for guidance. We supplicate to Him to make us righteous and reformers and grant us support in judging with Shari`ah, advising one another to do so and help one another in applying it.

Dear brothers in Allah, it is not hidden that it is obligatory to refer to Shari`ah because this is one of the responsibilities of the country and Muslims as well; especially, scholars because the need is enduring. It is obligatory on the chiefs of courts and judges as a whole to fear Allah, seek His help in solving Muslims' problems according to the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger, advise one another to do so and help one another to fulfill this. It is obligatory on judges and the chiefs of courts to fear Allah in all things, exert effort to know the rulings along with their proofs, advise each other about this and remain committed to this. A person should exert efforts to convey the truth and

rights to the people according to the proof as Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) states: ﴾(And) if you differ in anything amongst yourselves, refer it to Allâh and His Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم)﴿ And: ﴾And in whatsoever you differ, the decision thereof is with Allâh (He is the ruling Judge).﴿ There is no doubt that the matter requires great efforts

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to know legal rulings along with their proofs and to give support to the oppressed against the oppressor. Judges should give care for the opponents, judge between people with justice, examine the proofs of both claimer and defendant calmly for achieving justice, and seek the truth with delightfulness until they listen to both sides in order to be able to judge between them according to legal proofs, oaths taken by the claimant or the defendant, or by other means which help to know the truth and judge between the people when the evidence is lost. Thus, it is obligatory upon judges whether chiefs of courts or judges to give much care to this matter and give aid to the oppressed against the oppressors. They have also to be keen to know the legal proofs of rulings in order to judge among people according to them. They should be eager to suppress the corrupted and eradicate the cause of corruption by any means that pleases Allah as explained by the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him). The people are in dire need to suppress oppression and support the truth, aiding the oppressed and eliminating oppressors; especially in this time when Islam has become like a stranger, the people of falsehood have increased, and all kinds of corruption have spread everywhere. An oppressor is confused with an oppressed, a corruptor with a reformer, and the ignorant with the learned.

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This time is very strange, mixed up and full of trials that make people suffer except for those whom Allah protects. It is obligatory upon Du`ah (callers to Islam), judges, chiefs of courts, and rulers to exert efforts to know the truth with its proper evidence, give the right back to its people, prevent the oppressors from doing injustice, and give rights to those they are due as much as possible out of seeking Allah's reward and fearing His punishment. It is obligatory upon those in authority to care for carrying out the rulings of Shari`ah, cooperate with judges in all what brings people benefit, apply the laws of Allah upon them, and realize that this is the only way to secure the country, do justice to the oppressed, and guarantee safety from every evil. It is also the way to gain Allah's victory, support, and protection against enemies and opponents of Islam. We ask Allah to guide us all as well as all Du`ah, and scholars everywhere. May Allah guide all people to know the truth and follow it! I also ask Him to grant us understanding of Islam, be firm on it, and make us from the supporters of His religion and the sincere Du`ah. We ask Him to protect us from the evils of ourselves and the evils of our bad deeds. May Allah (He may be Glorified) guide all Muslims everywhere

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to good, truth and guidance, grant us good understanding of Islam, make the pious people rule, and set right the affairs of their leaders! I also ask Him (Glorified be He) to guide our rulers, especially, the Custodian of the two Sacred Mosques to that which pleases Him and help them in doing all what is good. We ask Him also to aid the truth with them and guide their retinue. May He make you and us from among those who are truly guided and guide all our judges, all Muslim judges and all chiefs of courts to follow and work according to the truth. We ask Him also to grant them patience and make them advise each other with patience as He (Glorified and Exalted be He) the Most Generous, the Most Bountiful. May peace and blessings be upon His Servant and Messenger, our Prophet Muhammad, his family, his Companions and those who followed him!

116- Advice for the students of the Higher Institute of the Judiciary

All praise is due to Allah. May peace and blessings of Allah be upon the Messenger of Allah, his family, his Companions and those who follow his guidance!

To proceed: I praise Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) for meeting with my Muslim brothers and my dear students. I ask Him (He may be Glorified) to bless our meeting, rectify our hearts and deeds. We ask Him to grant us understanding of His Din (religion) of Islam, be firm on it, and protect us all from the evils of ourselves and our bad deeds for He is the best to be asked. I would like to thank my Muslim brothers who are in charge of this institute for inviting me to this meeting. I ask Allah to bless them all, help them with their mission and make them guided and pious reformers for He is the All-Hearer, the All-Close.

Dear Muslim brothers, the virtue of knowledge is not hidden from you. Allah has made it one of the characteristics of prophets, angels and the best of people.

By knowledge, we know Allah, worship Him, and know His teachings which He sent down in His scriptures and revealed to His messengers. It is also not hidden that scholars are the heirs of prophets and their successors. It is enough to say that He (Glorified be He) made them witnesses along with His angels to His Oneness when He states: ﴿Allâh bears witness that Lâ ilâha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He), and the angels, and those having knowledge (also give this witness); (He always) maintains His creation in Justice. Lâ ilâha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He), the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.﴾ It is known that if the word "scholars" is generally mentioned in the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of the His Messenger (peace be upon him), it refers to scholars who know Allah's Shari`ah (Islamic law). They are the ones who have knowledge from the Book of Allah, the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him), and the followed regulations of Shari`ah. This is the meaning of the word "scholars" when it is generally mentioned in Qur'an, the Prophet's sayings, and the statements of the scholars of Shari`ah. Scientists in fields such as medicine, geography, and other fields are useful to the people and receive their reward according to their intentions. However, when the word "scholars" is generally mentioned in the Qur'an, the Sunnah and scholars' statements, it refers to scholars who have knowledge of the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger. They are the callers to Him who do good to Allah's servants by directing, guiding, educating and judging among them in disputable matters. They are levels in regard to the knowledge they have, their deeds and virtues which they receive from Allah

and the benefit they offer to the people. Of them are the scholars who teach the people, the admonishers, the reminders who remind people of their Lord, the guides, and the warners. Of them are the judges who judge between the people and solve their problems with the knowledge they receive from the Shari`ah. So, scholars have their virtues for they are the inheritors of prophets.

Judges have special merits because of the cases they handle and the problems they solve. They receive these special merits also because of deterring oppressors, helping the oppressed to retrieve their rights, and other issues for which the judiciary system exists. In addition to the virtue of knowledge they have, they pursue the best interests of Muslims, solve their problems, deter the oppressors, and declare the truth. O brothers of the Higher Institute of the Judiciary, the future is all for you. We ask Allah to help you in your studies which demands great effort and struggle. We ask Allah to grant you patience, success to reach the truth, deter the oppressor, help the oppressed to retrieve their rights and establish justice among Muslims.

It is not hidden also that a judge receives great merits, much good, and a double reward if he sincerely devotes his intention to Allah and follows the truth. Indeed, there is a heavy responsibility on the shoulders of judges although the reward is great. The people are in a dire need for judges to solve their problems and search for the truth. So, hope for good, maintain good intentions, and prepare in every way you can for this task.

You should also be equipped with patience, knowledge, and openness of the heart as well as being just in order to restore rights to their owners, and ward off injustice in light of the purified Shari`ah of Allah.

It was authentically reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him) that he stated: (If a judge gives a verdict according to the best of his knowledge and his verdict is correct (i.e. agrees with Allah and His Apostle's verdict), he shall receive a double reward, and if he gives a verdict according to the best of his knowledge and his verdict is wrong, (i.e. against that of Allah and His Apostle) even then he shall get a reward.) They shall have a double reward in addition to other rewards which they gain through seeking and searching for the truth, and asking their Muslim brothers. They shall have also reward for the other efforts that they exert before issuing a verdict. They will gain more knowledge,

guidance and piety according to their intention, effort, and devotedness to Allah and seeking the truth. How many benefits and rewards are gained by searching for the judgment of Allah in any case which

they arrive at the truth! They are offering a great service when they study with their colleagues and Shaykhs and are doing good in searching for the truth in the folds of books, the Book of Allah, and the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him). They shall have a great reward commensurate with their intentions, truthfulness, and devotedness; in addition to the benefits that Muslims gain, the continued security, and satisfaction which people feel when they see judges' keenness to protect the rights of the oppressed, deter the oppressors, seek the truth, spread justice, ward off wrong-doers and limit them. In doing so, Muslims gain tranquility, dedication to follow the truth, love of Islam, and contentment with it in a way that can not be appreciated except with Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He).

Another benefit which the weak, the distressed, and the oppressed get when they have their rights, is that they feel comfort, tranquility, and content with the justice of Shari`ah that guarantees rights and restricts those who transgress the limits. This makes people believe that there are scholars who exert efforts to deliver the rights

to their owners, deter oppressors, and stop their aggression.

These are the virtues of the judiciary and judges who succeed in protecting rights and seeking truth with discernment and guidance. However, there are other matters which are dangerous that a judge must take into consideration. They include lenience in searching and reaching the legal rulings, negligence in seeking the facts from the two claimants, or not having patience to listen to their words, or inclination to one of them over the other. These are some of the common mistakes.

A judge should beware of these matters and fear the danger which he may face because of his verdict. He must devote time to study the case, confirm the evidence, and to reach the verdict. He must also be patient to listen to the opponents regarding the case because these proofs will lead to uncover the truth. As for petty disputes, there is no need to hear them, but to know the proofs and claims of the claimant and the defendant in order to arrive at the truth and pass a verdict. He must be

upright and not take sides with anyone because of kinship, friendship, relationship to others. The goal is to arrive at the truth, ensure rights, and stop the aggression of oppressors with wisdom, good speech, and in an appropriate manner.

Another danger is to pass a verdict ignorantly or unjustly. It is known that judges are of three types: Two of them are in Hell and one is in Paradise. As for the two types who are in Hell, the Prophet (peace be upon him) explained their characteristics. They are those who give judgments ignorantly and unjustly. As for those who will be in Paradise, they are those who know the truth and judge accordingly. We ask Allah to make you and us from this type and protect us from the evil of ourselves and the bad consequences of our deeds. In conclusion, it is obligatory on judges to do the following:

1- Exerting much effort to reach the truth according to its proofs, observe patience, ask Allah for success and help, devote actions sincerely to Allah, and wait until being certain of the verdict.

2- Be of upright behavior, statements, and affairs according to the legally desired way wherever they

are whether in court house, streets, Masjids (mosques), and at home. They should also maintain moral standards and scholarly qualities in order

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that people feel comfortable about one's knowledge and background. They should guard themselves against the characteristics of ignorant and mentally deficient people. They should not also neglect the ordinances of Allah. If a judge neglects his religion and does not care much for the ordinances of Allah, he will be held in contempt in people's sight, his verdicts will be contested, and his status will not be respected in the hearts of the opponents, their relatives and other people.

3- They should give much care to understanding the case properly, not in hast. When there is confusion about the case, the verdict should be postponed to another time in order to be considered according to decisive evidence and insight. He must listen to the statements of the opponents and make sure of the way he judges as the verdict is based on the information derived from both of them.

4- They should always beseech Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) and ask Him for success in reaching the truth before passing verdict and at any other time. By doing so, they exert their utmost in achieving all spiritual, material, verbal, and practical causes for reaching the truth. Allah (He may be Glorified) loves those who supplicate Him, especially, His true servants and Awliya' (pious people) from among scholars and judges. This is because Allah responds to their supplications more quickly than the supplications of any other servants because of their great status with Him.

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He (Glorified be He) says: ﴾Invoke Me, [i.e. believe in My Oneness (Islâmic Monotheism) and ask Me for anything] I will respond to your (invocation).﴿ And: ﴾And when My slaves ask you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) concerning Me, then (answer them), I am indeed near (to them by My Knowledge). I respond to the invocations of the supplicant when he calls on Me (without any mediator or intercessor).﴿

I ask Allah by His Most Beautiful Names and Sublime Attributes to grant you and us useful knowledge and pious deeds. I ask Him to grant us understanding of Islam and to be firm on it and make us and you among the truly guided and make us all from among the callers for guidance.

5- There is a greater responsibility that falls on the shoulders of a judge other than giving verdicts which we should not overlook; that is the issue of enjoining good and forbidding evil, calling to Allah and teaching the people as much as he can. A judge should not forget this and exhort others to do so. Surely, he has free time which he can use in enjoining good and forbidding evil, call to Allah, teach the people in Masjids and benefit the people. The speech of a judge is always respected and has a great effect in the call to Allah, enjoining good and forbidding evil and in giving direction. These three matters should be a main focus of the judge

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as much as possible.

May Allah grant us all success, guidance, and good intention for He is the Most Generous, Most Bountiful! May peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family, his Companions and those who follow his path righteously!

Questions

Q 1: What are your directions to the judges concerning their preparedness and awareness of the system operating in their work environment?

A: This is definitely a very important concern; however, it is ruled by Allah's Shari`ah (Glorified and Exalted be He). If there is a need, things should be judged according to the Shari`ah. Judges should accept whatever agrees with it and warn against that which is contradictory. Also, there should be no fear or negligence in revealing Al-Haqq (the Truth), for the rank of a judge is one of the most sublime ranks; the scholars' rank. Thus, one should report to those in charge to rectify any prevailing mistake. Furthermore, if there is a confusing matter and he needs to consult other peers and colleagues, he should do this, for it is known that the Din (Islam) is based on sincere advice to Allah, His Book and His Messenger.

It is also important to be acquainted with people, their idioms, expressions,

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and norms, to be able to comprehensively understand every case well. This is really an important issue for a judge, which leads to solving many of the problems posed to him.

Q 2: Some criminals confess their crimes during investigations but deny them before the judge. What should a judge do? Should he take this denial into account, or what should he do?

A: We must elaborate on this issue. If the confession has to do with the rights of individuals, they have no right to deny even if they claim that they confessed under pressure. A judge should ask the investigators whether they confessed after a beating or they were obliged to do so? Otherwise, they have no right to deny charges if the matter is related to individuals. As for confessions that have do with Hudud (ordained punishments for violating Allah's Law) and Allah's rights, the majority of scholars hold the view that a criminal can withdraw his confessions to avert meting out the prescribed punishments. This is considered as application of an Islamic rule to prevent the ordained punishments when the crime is doubted.

The second view, which is known to the people of knowledge, is that when it is not related to the rights of individuals. In this case, denial will not be accepted if one confessed to the police or in any other place. It will be upheld by the judge if one confessed, as long as there is no evidence proving otherwise, such as confession under pressure.

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Q: Some people appointed to the judiciary may pay money or do anything else in order to avoid judicial positions for fear of failure to perform this responsibility properly or making an error when issuing judgments?

A: Each a case must be viewed individually. If one knows that he has the capacity to undertake judgeship, he should do so; especially because of the current need for scholars in the judicial corps. It is a fact that not every person is fit for the office of judge. Only a few of the people of knowledge are fit for this post. But if everyone declines, lawsuits will be suspended and postponed. Scholars declared that if a person fulfills the required conditions and there is a need for him, he must answer the call to duty.

Q 4: What do you advise students who have committed themselves to studying this curriculum?

A: I advise them to study these subjects until they understand them very well, because they are enrolled in this institute and made up their minds to study what is presented to them. I advise them to take these subjects seriously, study them thoroughly,

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and understand them in detail. They should discuss them between themselves or with their professors to clarify what is difficult to understand. If they have the opportunity, they should do their best in reading and studying the books of Hadith and Tafsir (explanation/exegesis of the meanings of the Qur'an) in order to gain deeper knowledge. By doing so, a Muslim will gain more knowledge and learn the value of time and spend day and night in studying these curriculums as well as the subjects related to judiciary or other issues, such as divorce and marriage which he needs to know in order to serve the public.

Q 5: A man was elected to be a judge while he has little knowledge. Should he decline or accept the position?

A: If he knows that he is unqualified to undertake this job, he should decline and not get himself into something harmful to him. He knows himself best. If he has insufficient knowledge and is unable to judge among the people based on true evidence, he should apologize or quit the job lest he should commit errors harmful to him and to others. However, I am afraid that these are just doubts or

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insinuations by Satan, so he should beware of this.

Q 6: Should a judge be stern in his job, or what should he do?

A: A judge should be wise; and be lenient when necessary and firm whenever necessary. However, leniency and refined morals should prevail, and he should be harsh only if necessary, according to Allah's statement (Exalted be He), ﴾And argue not with the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians), unless it be in (a way) that is better (with good words and in good manner, inviting them to Islâmic Monotheism with His Verses), except with such of them as do wrong﴿ If they are unjust, you should move from leniency to strictness. The rule is Allah's statement (Exalted be He), ﴾And by the Mercy of Allâh, you dealt with them gently.﴿ He (Glorified be He) also states, ﴾and speak good to people [i.e. enjoin righteousness and forbid evil, and say the truth about Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم]﴿ You argue with them in a gentle manner, unless one diverts from Al-Haqq (the Truth). In this case, there is no harm in using force against them and warning them of the consequences of their evil deeds. It may require more than this, such as putting them into jail to discipline them. However, it is always the gentle manner that should always prevail. This is the best.

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Q 7: What is the authenticity of this Hadith: (He who has been appointed a judge has been killed without a knife.) **?**

A: This is a good Hadith and known. It is related by Ahmad and Ahl-ul-Sunan (authors of Hadith compilations classified by jurisprudential themes). The Hadith was not meant to declare the judiciary apprehensible, but rather to warn people and stress the importance of the judiciary and its consequences. As slaughtering without a knife harms an animal and delays its death; likewise a judge may struggle with judgments but with patience and good work, it will be overcome. He suffers as like one slaughtered without a knife if he is not efficient or strays from the right way or forgets to seek the help of Allah.

It is no secret that the Prophet (peace be upon him) is the Imam (leader) of judges, the Imam of scholars, the example for all judges and their mentor. He was a judge, a Da`y (caller to Islam) and an enjoiner to good. These functions were all performed by him which exhorts judges, callers to Islam and scholars to follow him

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in patience and forbearance. Sometimes he became angry as his opponents drove him to anger, but still he is the master of the Ummah (Muslim community) and of the pious.

A judge is to follow the example of the Prophet (peace be upon him) in patience and seek the ways that lead to patience so that he may succeed. Every person shall have a share of suffering, but the more knowledge, patience, forbearance, and supplicating to Allah for success and guidance a judge has, the fewer problems he will face.

Q 8: May Allah protect you! You stated at the beginning of your speech that a judge is to enjoin what is good and forbid what is evil, so is he sinful if he fails to do this?

A: Yes, like any other persons a judge may even he more sinful as his words have a greater effect than those of others.

Q: Is it reported that judges will be gathered with kings, while scholars will be with prophets on the Day of Resurrection?

A: We know of no basis for such Hadith.

Q 10: I hope you will advise judges and employees to respect the regular working hours

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A: Indeed, this is of utmost importance. I recommend everyone, not only students and employees, to conform to working hours and regular attendance and pay a great attention to this. Allah (Exalted be He) made it compulsory on us to obey those in authority in good matters and this is a matter in the best interest of us all; employees, students and other Muslims. I exhort everyone in this institute and elsewhere to maintain regular attendance and schedules during work hours and fulfill their tasks. May Allah grant us all success and help us do that!

I ask Allah to guide us, protect us from the insinuations of Satan, and guide us all to what is beneficial. May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family, and Companions!

117-

Reconciliation between two Hadiths

regarding the judiciary and Ijtihad

Q: How to reconcile the Hadith related from the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him), ("There are three (types of) judges; two of them will be thrown into the Fire, while only one of them will be admitted into Jannah (Paradise). One (a judge) who will be admitted into Jannah is a man who knows what is right and gives judgment accordingly. (The other two are) A man who knows what is right but gives unfair judgments will enter the Fire, and one who gives judgments ignorantly will enter the Fire.") **(Related by Abu Dawud) and the other Hadith in which he (peace be upon him) stated that if a Mujtahid (a scholar qualified to exercise juristic effort to infer expert legal rulings) reaches a correct decision, he will be given a double reward, and if he makes a mistake, he will be given a single reward?**

A: There is no contradiction between the two mentioned Hadiths, Alhamdu lillah (All praise is due to Allah). On the contrary, their meaning is very clear. The first Hadith is related to a judge who passes judgments ignorantly without knowing the Shari`ah (Islamic Law) and will enter the Fire because he invents lies against Allah. Likewise, anyone who knows the Shari`ah but judges unfairly between people according to his whims or bribes etc., he will enter the Fire.

The first man judges between people while being ignorant of the Shari`ah rulings while the second judges between people unjustly and unfairly, so both will enter the Fire. On the other hand, the person who judges according to the Shari`ah, will enter Paradise.

The second Hadith was narrated by `Amr Ibn Al-`As (may Allah be pleased with him) and is recorded in the Two Sahih (authentic) Books of Hadith (i.e. Al-Bukhari and Muslim) that the Prophet (peace be upon him) stated, ("When a judge rules, he uses his legal judgment, and if he reaches a correct decision, he will be given a double reward, and if he uses his judgment and makes a mistake, he will be given a single reward.") This Hadith is of a judge who is well-acquainted with the Shari`ah rulings but he might lack experience in some issues, so he practices Ijtihad (juristic effort to infer expert legal rulings), searches for juristic evidence in the Qur'an and the Sunnah and tries to find the legal ruling. Such a judge will receive a single reward for his Ijtihad, but not the reward for arriving at the right judgment. His mistake will be forgiven because he knows the Shari`ah rulings, but may err even after employing Ijtihad, seeking the correct judgment, and having good intentions, so he will receive the reward for Ijtihad only.

The other judge, who will receive double reward, is the one who searches for the juristic evidence, practices Ijtihad, and succeeds in reaching a correct judgment. He will receive a reward for his

Ijtihad and another for arriving at the correct judgment.

Thus, there is no contradiction between the two Hadith, Alhamdu lillah.

118- Ruling on whoever has no other choice

but to seek judgment of positive laws

From `Abdul-`Aziz ibn `Abdullah ibn Baz to the honorable brother H. A. M. may Allah keep you in safe!

As-salamu alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh (May Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you!)

Referring to your request for Fatwa (legal opinion issued by a qualified Muslim scholar) no. 2151, dated 6/6/1407 A.H. in the Department of Scholarly Research and Ifta' in which you ask about the ruling on someone who has to appear in a court of law that judges according to positive laws and all other courts in their country are the same and they cannot claim their rights except in this way? Are they regarded as disbelievers?

I inform you that if he has no other choice, he is not considered a disbeliever. However, he should not appeal to these courts except in necessity, and he cannot claim his rights except through them. Also, he is not allowed to take other than what the purified Shari`ah allows.

May Allah guide all to what pleases him! As-salamu alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh

President of the Departments of Scholarly Research,

Ifta', Da`wah and Guidance

119-

Seeking judicial

or religious posts for sake of Muslims

Q: Many scholars evade assuming any religious posts. What is the reason for that? Could you please advise us in this regard? It is also noted that many students in Shari`ah (Islamic law) faculties evade any positions related to the judiciary. Please advise.

A: Religious posts in the judicial corps, education, giving Fatwas, and Khutbahs (sermons) are honorable and important ones that Muslims are in bad need of. If scholars abandon them, they will be assumed by ignorant people and so they shall go astray and misguide others.

So, if any scholar is needed to assume any of these posts whether judicial, educational, or related to

giving Khutbahs or Da`wah (calling to Allah) or the like, it will be Wajib (obligatory) on him to take charge of it. This is because such posts are considered collective obligations that when assigned to specific qualified persons it becomes Wajib on them to assume them and they are not allowed to evade.

However, if it seems that some scholars fulfill the need of Muslims regarding any of the foregoing posts, it will not be Wajib

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on other scholars to assume the same. Rather, they should do what is more beneficial to Muslims as done by Prophet Yusuf (Joseph, peace be upon him) when he said to the king of Egypt: ﴾[Yûsuf (Joseph)] said: "Set me over the store-houses of the land; I will indeed guard them with full knowledge" (as a minister of finance in Egypt).﴿ Prophet Yusuf (peace be upon him) asked to be given this post as he perceived that he would benefit the people. He was a prophet and a messenger and it is known that prophets are the best people who seek for the good. So, he did the good to the people of Egypt and called them to Al-Haqq (the Truth).

If seekers of knowledge see that they will benefit people, they may seek such posts and accept them whether they are judicial, educational or ministerial posts or others. Anyway, their intention should not be to attain pleasures of this world but to reform, do good, receive the reward from Allah in the Hereafter, and avail people with regard to their religious and worldly affairs. On the other hand, scholars should not let such posts to be assumed by the ignorant and the disobedient. When scholars are asked to assume posts that they see themselves qualified for them, they have not to hesitate. Rather they have to take charge of such posts, make their intention good, do their best and do not fear anything.

It is worth mentioning that with a good intention and sincere work, Allah makes His Servants succeed and assists them.

In this regard, it is narrated that `Uthman ibn Abu Al-`As Al-Thaqafy

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said: ﴾"O Messenger of Allah, make me the leader of Salah (Prayer) among my tribe." The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: "You are their leader, but you should follow on who is the weakest of them and have a Mu'adhin (caller to Prayer) who does not charge for his calling for Salah."﴿ (Related by Imam Ahmad and Ahl-ul-Sunan (authors of Hadith compilations classified by jurisprudential themes) with a Sahih (authentic) chain of narrators).

So, `Uthman (may Allah be pleased with him) asked to be the leader of his people to attain the legal benefit for them, direct them to goodness, educate them, enjoin them to do the good and forbid the bad as Yusuf (peace be upon him) did.

Scholars said it is forbidden to ask for leadership in case there is no necessity as it is a dangerous matter. In the Hadith, it is prohibited to do so but in case that the need and the legal benefit require so, it is allowed to ask for it as in the story of prophet Yusuf and the Hadith of `Uthman (may Allah be pleased with him).

120-

The obligation of establishing justice between Muslim and non-Muslim workers

Q 1: I have two equally capable workers, one of them is a Muslim and the other is a Kafir (non-Muslim). I am asked to assess their work. Is it permissible for me to act unjustly to the Kafir because of his beliefs?

A: You must establish justice between them. However, it would be best to fire the Kafir, even if he is more efficient, as Muslim workers are more blessed, even if they are less efficient, let alone equally qualified with non-Muslims. It was authentically reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him) (that he advised expelling the Kafirs out of the Arabian Peninsula, so that there remains only one faith in it.) May Allah grant us success!

121-

Ruling on paying someone who refuses
to do the work they are charged with except in return for money

Q: A benefactor provided us with a water tank for free, but the driver of the tank delays delivery the water till he is given ten riyals which he claims he deserves in return for his efforts. Sometimes, he does not deliver water to some houses which do not pay him. Is it permissible to give him the ten riyals in return for his services, i.e. delivering the water tank? Kindly, give us a Fatwa (legal opinion issued by a qualified Muslim scholar) in this regard, may Allah reward you! You should bear in mind that the contractor is often aware of this.

A: It is not permissible to give him money, for this entails helping him in dishonesty and withholding water from the persons who are unable to pay. You must refer this matter to the benefactor to replace him, or to the judge to punish him duly and appoint someone else to perform this job.

122-

Unlawfulness of

a woman attending court with an Ajnaby

Q: A woman was summoned by court and a policeman came to take her. Given that the judiciary in such a country is not based upon the Shari`ah (Islamic law), and thus she would be in the company of an Ajnaby (man lawful for the woman to marry), her father gave the policeman a sum of money to let her come later in the company of her son. Is he to blame for doing this, bearing in mind that in this way he kept the mother from being in the company of men?

A: There is nothing wrong with this if he kept her from going with men by any means and then he or her son went with her. This is safer than letting her go alone with the policeman. This is a good act on your part.

123- Ruling on working as a lawyer

Q: What is the ruling of the Shari`ah (Islamic law) on working as a lawyer? What is Your Eminence's viewpoint concerning what the eminent Shaykh Abul-Ala Al-Mawdudi (may Allah be merciful with him) said in the last part of his Al-Qanun Al-Islami Wa Turuq Tanfidhuh (Islamic Law and Methods of its Application) about practicing this profession? Appreciate your guidance, may Allah guide you!

A: I do not know of anything wrong with working as a lawyer, because it is representation for a person in claims and defense, so long as the lawyer seeks to do what is right and does not deliberately tell lies, as it is common among lawyers.

As for the account of Shaykh Abul-Ala Al-Mawdudi (may Allah have mercy on him) which you referred to, I have not read it.

124- Conditions for working as a lawyer

Q: When working as a defense lawyer, one may have to support and defend evil, because the defense lawyer tries to prove the innocence of the guilty person whom he is pleading for. Is the income of a defense lawyer who does that, Haram (prohibited)? Are there any Islamic conditions attached to a person working as a lawyer?

A: Defense also means protection, and if a person defends and protects evil then undoubtedly this is Haram, because it means committing what Allah prohibits in His Saying: ﴾but do not help one another in sin and transgression.﴿ But if the lawyer protects and defends good, then this is a praiseworthy kind of protection as enjoined in Allah's Saying: ﴾Help you one another in Al-Birr and At-Taqwâ (virtue, righteousness and piety); but do not help one another in sin and transgression.﴿

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125- Warning against paying bribes

From `Abdul-`Aziz ibn `Abdullah Ibn Baz to whoever may see or hear it from among my Muslim brethren. May Allah guide them and me to His Right Path, and protect me and them from the punishment of Hellfire! As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh (May Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you!)

Out of what was strictly prohibited by Islam is bribery i.e., paying money to have one's interest fulfilled by an official who is responsible to do so without receiving such money. It is to be most prohibited if the aim behind paying this money is to render unlawful what is lawful or vice versa or to wrong any person.

Ibn `Abdin (may Allah be merciful with him) stated in his book Hashiyat Radd al-Muhtar `ala al-Durr al-Mukhtar: "Bribery is: what one gives to a ruler or any other person to judge in his favor or to compel him to do what he wants." It is clear from this definition that bribery is broader than being money or an interest that one could offer or afford. What is meant by the ruler is: a judge or any other official, i.e. all those who can do a job

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to the briber, whether they are out of the rulers and civil servants or those achieving special tasks such as traders' agents, companies, owners of real estates, etc. Judging in favor of the briber and compelling the bribed person to do what the briber wants means: Fulfilling the desire and purpose of the briber, whether rightly or wrongly.

Dear brothers in Islam, bribery is one of the major sins that Allah prohibited for His servants, and His Messenger (peace be upon him) cursed the person practicing it. It is obligatory for Muslims to keep away from it and be cautious about it and to warn people against practicing it, because it involves great evil, grave sin, and bad consequences. It is out of the sin and transgression that Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) forbade us to cooperate in them. Allah the Exalted said: ﴿Help you one another in Al-Birr and At-Taqwâ (virtue, righteousness and piety); but do not help one another in sin and transgression.﴾

Forbidding eating up people's money unjustly, Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴿O you who believe! Eat not up your property among yourselves unjustly except it be a trade amongst you, by mutual consent.﴾ and:

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﴿And eat up not one another's property unjustly (in any illegal way e.g. stealing, robbing, deceiving, etc.), nor give bribery to the rulers (judges before presenting your cases) that you may knowingly eat up a part of the property of others sinfully.﴾ Bribery is the severest kind of eating up money unjustly because it means paying money to others to make them evade what is right.

The prohibition includes the three pillars of bribery, i.e. the briber, bribed, and the mediator between them. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ("Allah has cursed the briber, the bribed, and the mediator between them.") (Narrated by Ahmad and Al-Tabarany)

Being cursed by Allah means being cast out and expelled out of the places entailing His Mercy. We seek refuge with Allah from this. One can incur this only when committing a cardinal sin. Bribery is also out of the Suht (ill-gotten earnings) forbidden by both the Qur'an and the Sunnah. Denouncing the Jews for illegally devouring Suht (ill-gotten earnings), Allah (Exalted be He) says: ((They like to) listen to falsehood, to devour anything forbidden.) Allah (Exalted be He) also says about them: (For the wrong-doing of the Jews, We made unlawful for them certain good foods which had been lawful for them - and for their hindering many from Allâh's Way;) (And their taking of Ribâ (usury) though they were forbidden from taking it and their devouring of men's substance wrongfully (bribery).)

There are many Hadiths warning against this forbidden affair and displaying its bad consequence

and the consequence of those committing it. Out of these Hadiths are:

What was narrated by Ibn Jarir on the authority of Ibn `Umar (may Allah be pleased with them both) that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: (For every flesh that is grown from Suht (ill-gotten earnings), Hellfire is the most entitled to it. Tt was said: "What is Suht?" He (the Prophet) said: "Bribery in ruling.")

It was narrated by Imam Ahmad that `Amr ibn Al-`As (may Allah be pleased with him) said: I heard the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) saying: (If usury emerges among any people, they will

suffer bad harvest, and if bribery emerges among any people, they will suffer intense terror.) It was narrated by Al-Tabarany that Ibn Mas`ud (may Allah be pleased with him) said: "Suht is bribery according to religion." Abu Muhammad Muwaffaq Al-Din ibn Qudamah (may Allah be merciful with him) said in Al-Mughny: "Al-Hasan and Sa`id ibn Jubayr said regarding Tafsir (exegesis of the meanings of the Qur'an) of Allah's saying: (to devour anything forbidden.) this refers to bribery." He also stated: "If the judge accepts, this will lead him to disbelief; this is because he is willing to judge by other than what Allah has revealed: (And whosoever does not judge by what Allâh has revealed, such are the Kâfirûn (i.e. disbelievers of a lesser degree as they do not act on Allâh's Laws).)

It was narrated by Muslim that Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) said: The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: (Allah is good and accepts nothing but what is good. Indeed, Allah commands the believers with what He commands the Messengers and says:

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(O (you) Messengers! Eat of the Tayyibât [all kinds of Halâl foods which Allâh has made lawful (meat of slaughtered eatable animals, milk products, fats, vegetables, fruits, etc.] and do righteous deeds.) And: (O you who believe (in the Oneness of Allâh - Islâmic Monotheism)! Eat of the lawful things that We have provided you with) Then he (peace be upon him) mentioned a man who has travelled on a long journey and is dishevelled and covered with dust; he stretches forth his hands to the heaven, (saying) "O Lord, O Lord", but his food is Haram, his drink is Haram, all his nourishment is Haram, so how can his Du`a' (supplication) be accepted?)

O Muslims, fear Allah and beware of His Wrath and avoid what causes his Wrath. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) is jealous if what He has made inviolable is violated. It was narrated in a Sahih (authentic) Hadith: (There is none who has more ghaira (self-respect) than Allah) Guard yourselves and your families against unlawful money and food to save yourselves and your families from Hellfire that Allah made most entitled of every flesh that is grown from Suht. Unlawful food also prevents supplication from being accepted, based on the previously mentioned Hadith of Abu Hurayrah recorded in Sahih Muslim and based on what was narrated by Al-Tabarany that Ibn `Abbas (may Allah be pleased with them both) said: (I recited in the presence of Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) the following Ayah:

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(O mankind! Eat of that which is lawful and good on the earth) Thereupon Sa`d ibn Abu Waqqas stood up to say: 'O Messenger of Allah! Make Du`a' (supplication) to Allah so that my Du`a' will always be answered.' So the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "O Sa`d! Get your food from lawful means and your Du`a' will always be answered. By the One in Whose Hand is the life of Muhammad, a servant would put an unlawful morsel in his stomach, and his actions will not be accepted for forty days. Whenever a person develops a pot belly from ill-gotten means and usury, he will be admitted to Hell)

This was recorded by Al-Hafizh ibn Rajab (may Allah be merciful with him) in the book of Jami' Al-'Ulum Wa Al-Hikam. It was narrated by Al-Tabarany (may Allah be merciful with him). This indicates that not seeking lawful food prevents one's supplication from being accepted and blocks it from being raised to Allah. What a great misfortune and loss this is on the part of the one doing so. We seek refuge with Allah from this.

Allah called you to protect yourselves and your families against Hellfire so as to be safe from the Torture of Allah and His severe punishment, where Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: (O you

who believe! Ward off yourselves and your families against a Fire (Hell) whose fuel is men and stones, over which are (appointed) angels stern (and) severe, who disobey not, (from executing) the Commands they receive from Allâh, but do that which they are commanded.》 O Muslims, respond to the call of your Lord and obey His command and avoid what He prohibited and beware of

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what causes His wrath so as to gain prosperity in both the worldly life and the Hereafter. Allah (Exalted be He) said: 《O you who believe! Answer Allâh (by obeying Him) and (His) Messenger when he (صلى الله عليه وسلم) calls you to that which will give you life, and know that Allâh comes in between a person and his heart (i.e. He prevents an evil person to decide anything). And verily to Him you shall (all) be gathered.》 《And fear the Fitnah (affliction and trial) which affects not in particular (only) those of you who do wrong (but it may afflict all the good and the bad people), and know that Allâh is Severe in punishment.》

We supplicate to Allah to make us and you out of those who listen to speech and follow the best of it, out of those who help each other in righteousness and piety, and out of those who abide by the Glorious Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger (peace be upon him). May Allah protect us and you from the evils within ourselves and our misdeeds and give victory to His Religion and make His Word superior and guide our rulers to all that benefits people and countries. He is the One Who is Capable of doing so.

As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh (May Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you!)

The General Chairman of the Departments of Scholarly Research,

Ifta', Daw`ah, and Guidance

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126- Impact of bribery on society

Q: What is the condition of the society wherein bribery spreads?

A: There is no doubt that when sins prevail, this results in the disunity of society and severing the ties of affection among its individuals. This also results in feelings of grudge and enmity and lack of cooperation in what is good. Out of the worst impacts on societies resulting from bribery and other sins are the prevalence and spread of vices, the absence of virtues, the individuals of society wronging one another due to usurping the rights of others by means of bribery, theft, betrayal, cheating in transactions, bearing false witness, and other kinds of injustice and transgression. All these kinds are the worst of crimes

and cause the Wrath of the Lord. They also bring feelings of grudge and enmity among Muslims and causes general punishment. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: 《If acts of disobedience are done among any people and do not change them, Allah will soon punish them all.》 (Related by Imam Ahmad with a Sahih (authentic) chain of narrators on the authority of Abu Bakr Al-Siddiq (may Allah be pleased with him))

127- Evil impact of bribery

Q: What are the bad effects that bribery can result in regarding Muslims' interests, conduct and behavior?

A: The answer to this question can be made clear through the answer of the previous one. From the bad effects of bribery on the public interests of Muslims is oppressing the weak and wasting or delaying their rights unduly, in order to get bribes. Out of its bad effects is that it spoils the manners of the person taking it, whether being a judge, official, etc., because they bias and oppress or completely disregard the right of those who do not pay bribes. Taking bribes renders one's faith weak and makes one liable to Allah's Wrath and His severe punishment in the worldly life and in the Hereafter. Allah's mill goes slowly, but it grinds well. Allah may accelerate the punishment of the oppressor to take place in this worldly life before the Hereafter as stated in the Sahih (authentic) Hadith from the Prophet (peace be upon him): ﴾There is no sin more fitted in the sight of Allah to have punishment meted out for its perpetrator in advance in this world along with what He stores up for him in the next world than oppression and severing ties of relationship.﴿

There is no doubt that bribery and all the other kinds of oppression are out of the transgression that Allah has prohibited. It is related in the Two Sahih (authentic) Books of Hadith (i.e., Al-Bukhari and Muslim) that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾Allah (may He be Exalted) despites the wrongdoers, but when He takes them, none can't escape. The Prophet (peace be upon him) then recited Allah's Saying: ﴾Such is the Seizure of your Lord when He seizes the (population of) the towns while they are doing wrong. Verily, His Seizure is painful, (and) severe.﴿ ﴿

128-What is the ruling on bribery

Q: What is the ruling on bribery?

A: Bribery is Haram (prohibited) according to the Ijma` (consensus) and religious texts of Qur'an and Hadith. It is anything paid to a ruler or others to make them deviate from Al-Haqq (the Truth), and rule for the benefit of the briber according to their own desires. It is authentically reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) cursed the briber, the bribed, and the mediator between them.

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There is no doubt that they are sinners and deserve to be censured and punished, for helping one another in sin and transgression. Allah (Glorified be He) says: ﴾Help you one another in Al-Birr and At-Taqwâ (virtue, righteousness and piety); but do not help one another in sin and transgression. And fear Allâh. Verily, Allâh is Severe in punishment.﴿

129- The effects of bribery on a Muslim's faith

Q: What are the effects of bribery on a Muslim's faith?

A: There is no doubt that bribe and other sins weaken faith and incur Allah's Wrath as well as give Satan an upper hand over the person so that they commit other evil deeds. It is necessary on every Muslim to avoid bribery and all sins and to give back the bribe to those who paid it if possible and if not, one should give it or its value in charity to the poor and offer sincere repentance to Allah in the view that Allah may accept his repentance.

130- A question relating to bribery

Q: Is it permissible for me to bribe an officer or official who decides suits such as a judge or a chairman of a committee that

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checks lands? It may be worth mentioning that my right can only be proven if I give such a bribe. Giving the bribe will not cause me to wrong anyone else but my right will be lost if I do not. If giving a bribe in this case is permissible, what about the punishment mentioned in the Hadith of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) that reads: (Allah has cursed the briber, the bribed, and the mediator between them.)

A: Bribing an official, whether they are judges, princes, or committees that judge between people, is not permissible. Doing so is not only plainly Haram (prohibited), but it is also one of the major sins as the Hadith mentioned above shows. This is because giving bribes leads to injustice and depriving those who do not pay them of their rights.

131- Ruling on whoever hinders implementation of instructions until they are bribed

From `Abdul-`Aziz ibn `Abdullah Ibn Baz to the respected brother, His Highness Prince `A. M. S., may Allah guide you to all that pleases Him and increase you in knowledge and Iman (Faith/belief)! Amen. As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh (May Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you!)

I received your noble attached letter that included

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the following:

Question: What is the ruling on whoever hinders the implementation of instructions until they are bribed?

My answer is: It is not permissible to give such a person any money (bribe). This is because it is authentically reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) cursed the briber and the bribed. Moreover, giving bribes leads to big corruption, wronging people, and encouraging injustice.

Mufty of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

and Chairman of Council of Senior Scholars

and Department of Scholarly Research and Ifta'

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Book of testimonies

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132- Considering uprightness of witnesses while checking evidence

Q: Could you please tell me about the sequence of refuting evidence? If a claimant, for example, provides evidence for their claim then the defendant provides evidence to refute the claimant's one; does the judge listen to evidence that invalidates the invalidating evidence regardless of how long the sequence is and why?

A: Both Qur'an and Sunnah (whatever is reported from the Prophet) signify the obligation of considering `Adalat-ul-Shuhud (uprightness of witnesses) while checking evidence. Allah (Glorified be He) thus says: ﴾And take as witness two just persons from among you (Muslims).﴿ and: ﴾such as you agree for witnesses﴿ On the other hand, it is well-established that people are originally discharged of responsibility for others' rights or possessions. They do not thus bear such responsibility unless there is reliable evidence. Since it is clear that the testimony of Fasiqs (those flagrantly violating Islamic law) and Majhuls (those whose character is unknown) can not be depended on, `Adalat-ul-Shuhud is thus indispensable to the evidence, its recommenders, and refuters if any. This is why scholars state that testimony, recommendation, and refutation are to be accepted when they are made by those who are just, and aware of the condition of the recommended or refuted evidence. Accordingly,

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the judge has to verify and check the condition of evidence that he relies on in his judgment until justice is applied even if doing so leads to sequence. If the forgoing is not available, it is permissible for the judge to decide the suit according to what most probably proves the truth, even if this leads to putting the claimant to oath though they provide evidence. Finally, separating witnesses when giving their testimonies may be resorted to in case of fearing that they collude to lie.

133- Obligation of Shahadah if required and prohibition of concealing it

Q: A questioner from Riyadh says, "I sought to reconcile between two conflicting parties, but they did not reconcile. Later, one of them filed a complaint against the other, and he came to me to testify with him of what I know. What is the ruling of Shari`ah (Islamic law) on this? Is it permissible for me to testify to what I heard during my attempt of reconciliation? Please advise, may Allah reward you!

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A: You should testify according to your knowledge if you are asked to do so, according to Allah's Saying (Glorified and Exalted be He), ﴾And conceal not the evidence for he, who hides it, surely his heart is sinful. And Allâh is All-Knower of what you do.﴿ May Allah grant us success!

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Book of knowledge

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134- Merits of acquiring knowledge and working accordingly

All praise be to Allah Alone, and peace and blessings be upon Allah's Messenger, his family, Companions, and all those who follow his way.

I thank Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) for granting me this chance to meet with my honorable sons and brothers at the university of Imam Muhammad ibn Su`ud (may Allah be merciful with him) to recommend one another to truth and help one another in righteousness and piety. My speech today is entitled: Merits of acquiring knowledge and applying it.

I ask Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) to bless this meeting, set right all our hearts and deeds, grant us along with all Muslims the comprehensive understanding of His religion, and keep us firm on this. May Allah make His Din victorious, His Word supreme! May He set right the conditions of Muslims everywhere, grant them the comprehensive understanding of their religion, let their affairs be entrusted to the best amongst them, and set right their leaders! I ask Allah (Glorified be He) to guide our authorities to all goodness, help them to attain it, make them to support His religion, and set right their retinue. May Allah make them and us all amongst those who are guided and guiding others to truth! Verily, Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) is capable of doing all things.

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Dear brothers in the cause of Allah, Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) created all His Servants to worship Him. He sent His messengers and revealed His Books for this great purpose; to call people to worship Allah and to explain the meaning of such `Ibadah (worship) to them. Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾And I (Allâh) created not the jinn and mankind except that they should worship Me (Alone).﴿ ﴾I seek not any provision from them (i.e. provision for themselves or for My creatures) nor do I ask that they should feed Me (i.e. feed themselves or My creatures).﴿ ﴾Verily, Allâh is the All-Provider, Owner of Power, the Most Strong.﴿

And: ﴾O mankind! Worship your Lord (Allâh), Who created you and those who were before you so that you may become Al-Muttaqûn (the pious - See V.2:2).﴿ And: ﴾And verily, We have sent among every Ummah (community, nation) a Messenger (proclaiming): "Worship Allâh (Alone), and avoid (or keep away from) Tâghût (all false deities i.e. do not worship Tâghût besides Allâh)."﴿

Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) also says: ﴾Alif-Lâm-Râ. [These letters are one of the miracles of the Qur'ân, and none but Allâh (Alone) knows their meanings]. (This is) a Book which We have revealed unto you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه و سلم) in order that you might lead mankind out of darkness (of disbelief and polytheism) into light (of belief in the Oneness of Allâh and Islâmic Monotheism) by their Lord's Leave to the Path of the All-Mighty, the Owner of all Praise.﴿ There are many other Ayahs (Qur'anic verses) to the same effect.

On the other hand, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said in a Sahih (authentic) Hadith: ﴾Whoever follows a path to seek knowledge, Allah will make the path to Jannah (Paradise) easy for them.﴿ And: ﴾The example of guidance and knowledge with which Allah has sent me

is like a rain falling on the earth, some of which was fertile soil that absorbed rain water and brought forth vegetation and grass in abundance. Another portion of it was hard and held the rain water and Allah benefited the people with it and they utilized it for drinking, making their animals drink from it and for irrigating and cultivating the land. A portion of it was barren which could neither hold the water nor bring forth vegetation (then that land gave no benefits). The first is the example of the person who comprehends Allah's religion and benefits (from the knowledge) which Allah has revealed through me (the Prophet) and learns and then teaches others. (Then the other type is) one who does not pay attention to (the revealed knowledge) and thus does not accept guidance of Allah with which I have been sent.﴿ (Agreed upon by Imams Al-Bukhari and Muslim).

This significant Hadith clarifies that people are of three categories:

First: Those who learn their religion and act upon it. Their likeness is that of fertile soil that absorbs rain and brings forth vegetation and grass in abundance. They thus attain the comprehensive understanding of religion and teach other people.

Second: Those who learn their religion comprehensively and convey knowledge to people, but, unlike the first category, they are not capable of teaching others. They are more inclined thus to memorize Hadiths and narrations which are reported from the Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet) and convey them to people.

Third: Those who keep away from knowledge. They neither acquire comprehensive understanding of religion nor convey it to others. Their likeness is that of barren land that neither holds water nor brings forth vegetation.

This Hadith thus signifies the obligation of understanding religion and acquiring knowledge on every Mukallaf (person meeting the conditions to be held legally accountable for their actions) in order not to be amongst the third category referred to above. Besides, you -O Servant of Allah - were created and were commanded to worship Allah and this can not be achieved unless you acquire knowledge. Otherwise, how can you offer an `Ibadah (worship) that you do not know?

You are created for `Ibadah as Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾And I (Allâh) created not the jinn and mankind except that they should worship Me (Alone).﴿ You are commanded to worship Allah as He (Exalted be He) says: ﴾O mankind! Worship your Lord (Allâh)﴿ Moreover, messengers were sent to call people to worship Allah as He (Exalted be He) says: ﴾And verily, We have sent among every Ummah (community, nation) a Messenger (proclaiming): "Worship Allâh (Alone), and avoid (or keep away from) Tâghût (all false deities i.e. do not worship Tâghût besides Allâh)."﴿ No one can offer such `Ibadah in a way that pleases Allah unless they seek the help of Allah, acquire knowledge, and

exert their efforts to understand religion comprehensively. The concerned `Ibadah is the Din (religion) of Islam itself. It is Iman (Faith), guidance, obedience to Allah and His Messenger, believing in Tawhid (belief in the Oneness of Allah/ monotheism), and following the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him). Such `Ibadah is the guidance with which Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) sent His Messenger (peace be upon him) as mentioned in Allah's saying: ﴾whereas there has surely come to them the Guidance from their Lord!﴿ Such `Ibadah is Tawhid, obeying Allah, following the messengers, conforming to Shari`ah (Islamic law), Islam, Iman, Taqwa (fearing Allah as He should be feared),

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and righteousness. You have thus to understand and learn deeply the meaning of `Ibadah in light of the Glorious Qur'an and the Purified Sunnah (whatever is reported from the Prophet).

Verily, the Glorious Qur'an and the Purified Sunnah are the two ways leading to proper understanding of religion and the way of applying it. After that is Ijma` (consensus) of the pious predecessors of our Ummah (nation) that is based on Qur'an and Sunnah and which is considered the third primary source to the truth and the way to follow it. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾When Allah wants to do good to a person, He makes them comprehend religion.﴿ And: ﴾The best among you (Muslims) are those who learn Qur’an and teach it.﴿ And: ﴾Whoever follows a path to seek knowledge, Allah will make easy for them the path to Jannah (Paradise).﴿ The Prophet (peace be upon him) also said: ﴾When a person calls others to follow right guidance, his reward will be equivalent to those who follow him (in righteousness) without their reward being diminished in any respect. (Conversely) when a person invites others to follow error, his sin will be equivalent to that of the people who follow him (in sinfulness) without their sins being diminished in any respect.﴿

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One day the Prophet (peace be upon him) said to his Sahabah: ﴾Which of you would like to go to Bathan (a valley in Madinah) and return from it with two large-humped she-camels, without committing a sin or severing the ties of kinship? They replied: 'O Messenger of Allah! We (all) would like that!' He (peace be upon him) said: 'If any of you go to the Masjid (mosque) and learn or recite two Ayahs (verses) from the Book of Allah (Qur'an), this is better for him than two she-camels, and three (Ayahs) are better than three (she-camels), and four (Ayahs) are better than four (she-camels). And the number (of Ayahs recited in total) are better than the same number of camels'.﴿

O Servant of Allah! You are created to worship Allah. You are commanded to offer `Ibadah in the way that Allah ordains. Again, you can not achieve the foregoing unless you seek the help of Allah and acquire comprehensive understanding of religion.

I thus advise myself, all of you, and all those whom this speech may reach to fear Allah in secret and in public, and to care for grasping the religion properly and attentively. Each Mukallaf (person meeting the conditions to be held legally accountable for their actions) has thus to learn the well-established issues of religion so as to know Allah's commands in order to follow them, and Allah's prohibitions in order to avoid them with deep insight. This is Wajib (obligatory) on all Muslims.

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On the other hand, scholars (may Allah grant them success) have to teach people the Din (religion) of Islam, clarify it to them, and be patient in doing so. This is because Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾Verily, those who conceal the clear proofs, evidence and the guidance, which We have

sent down, after We have made it clear for the people in the Book, they are the ones cursed by Allâh and cursed by the cursers.) (Except those who repent and do righteous deeds, and openly declare (the truth which they concealed). These, I will accept their repentance. And I am the One Who accepts repentance, the Most Merciful.) And: ((And remember) when Allâh took a covenant from those who were given the Scripture (Jews and Christians) to make it (the news of the coming of Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم and the religious knowledge) known and clear to mankind, and not to hide it) Allah thus took a covenant from the People of the Book to clarify matters to people and not to hide them. Similarly, Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) took our covenant to clarify and explain Din. Every Muslim has thus to learn and enquire about matters of his Din. Allah (Exalted be He) says: (So ask the people of the Reminder, if you do not know.)

Muslims have thus to learn Din, be well-versed in it, and act upon it. Thus, we have to what is ordained by Allah through the Qur'an, Sunnah, and true pious scholars. We also have to beseech our Lord to grant us success and support. It is also a must that we have to act upon what we learn. This is because Allah (Exalted be He) says: (And say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) "Do deeds! Allâh will see your deeds, and (so will) His Messenger and the believers.)

(O mankind! Be dutiful to your Lord) Being dutiful to Allah is to act upon His Din. Allah (Glorified be He) also says: (O you who believe! Fear Allâh (by doing all that He has ordered and by abstaining from all that He has forbidden) as He should be feared. [Obey Him, be thankful to Him, and remember Him always], and die not except in a state of Islâm [as Muslims (with complete submission to Allâh)].) (And hold fast, all of you together, to the Rope of Allâh (i.e. this Qur'ân), and be not divided among yourselves)

O Servant of Allah! You are thus commanded to be dutiful to Allah and to practice Islam and Iman that call for acquiring knowledge and acting upon it. Allah (Exalted be He) says: (Truly, the religion with Allâh is Islâm.) Moreover, the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: (Iman has over seventy branches or - as in another narration - over sixty branches, the most excellent of which is the declaration that there is no deity but Allah, and the humblest of which is the removal of what is injurious from the path.)

Allah (Exalted be He) says: (but Al-Birr (is the quality of the one) who fears Allâh.) And: (whereas there has surely come to them the Guidance from their Lord!) You are thus commanded to acquire comprehensive knowledge to know this Din of Islam, Taqwa (fearing Allah as He should be feared), Islam,

Iman, righteousness, and guidance. All such words in fact refer to one thing, i.e., Tawhid and obedience to Allah which is `Ibadah for which we are created. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: (Truly, the religion with Allâh is Islâm.) You have thus to know the obligations ordained by Allah which are all based on Tawhid and belief in the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him). The basic root of the Din is Shahadah (Testimony of Faith) that La ilaha illa Allah (there is no deity but Allah) and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. The essence of Shahadah is to believe in Tawhid, worship Allah Alone truthfully and sincerely, believe in His Messenger (peace be upon him), and follow his way in all your affairs and regarding all kinds of `Ibadah.

The testimony of La ilaha illa Allah makes it Wajib on you to be sincere to Allah and worship Him Alone wherever you are and under all conditions; in secret and in public as well as in adversity and

prosperity.

On the other hand, the testimony that Muhammad (peace be upon him) is the (last) Messenger of Allah makes it Wajib on you to follow him, believe that Allah (Exalted be He) sent him to all Jinn (creatures created from fire) and mankind, and yield to his Shari`ah (Islamic law) as Allah (Glorified be He) commands in the Qur'an:﴾ And obey Allâh and the Messenger (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم)﴿

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And: ﴾And whatsoever the Messenger (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) gives you, take it; and whatsoever he forbids you, abstain (from it).﴿ And: ﴾And let those who oppose the Messenger's (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) commandment (i.e. his Sunnah - legal ways, orders, acts of worship, statements) (among the sects) beware, lest some Fitnah (disbelief, trials, afflictions, earthquakes, killing, overpowered by a tyrant) should befall them or a painful torment be inflicted on them.﴿ Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) also says: ﴾By the star when it goes down (or vanishes).﴿ ﴾Your companion (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) has neither gone astray nor has erred.﴿ i.e., Muhammad (peace be upon him): ﴾Nor does he speak of (his own) desire.﴿ ﴾It is only a Revelation revealed.﴿

In addition, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾I have been given the Qur'an and something like it (Sunnah).﴿

All Muslims and Mukallafs (those meeting the conditions to be held legally accountable for their actions) whether men or women along with all other human beings and Jinn have to believe in Tawhid. They have to worship Allah Alone, believe that Allah (Exalted be He) is their True Lord and God. They have to believe in Allah's Names and Attributes and acknowledge them in a manner that suits Allah's Majesty without Tahrif (distortion of the meaning), Ta`til (denial of Allah's Attributes), Takyif (questioning Allah's Attributes), or Tamthil (likening Allah's Attributes to those of His Creation). They have to obey all the commands of Allah (Glorified be He) and avoid all His prohibitions.

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This is what all Jinn and human beings have to learn and act upon. This is the purpose of their creation and this is the command they are given. All mankind and Jinn have to advise one another to act in accordance with this purpose. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾The believers, men and women, are Auliyâ' (helpers, supporters, friends, protectors) of one another; they enjoin (on the people) Al-Ma'rûf (i.e. Islâmic Monotheism and all that Islâm orders one to do), and forbid (people) from Al-Munkar (i.e. polytheism and disbelief of all kinds, and all that Islâm has forbidden); they perform As-Salât (Iqâmat-as-Salât), and give the Zakât, and obey Allâh and His Messenger. Allâh will have His Mercy on them. Surely Allâh is All-Mighty, All-Wise.﴿

These are the morals and characteristics of believing men and women: ﴾The believers, men and women, are Auliyâ' (helpers, supporters, friends, protectors) of one another﴿ They are neither enemies nor adversaries. Rather, they are protectors and friends to one another. This is the description that is given to them in the Qur'an; they love, advise, support, and recommend one another to the truth. There is no rancor, hatred, lying, cheating, or disloyalty amongst them.

This is the nature of believing men and women. If you have any bad feeling against a Muslim, you are untruthful to them, or you wrong them; know that you decrease your Iman and violate it by such dispraised behavior of yours be it disloyalty, cheating, Ghibah (backbiting), Namimah (tale-bearing),

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lying, or injustice. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾A Muslim is inviolable for his Muslim brother, as for his blood, wealth and honor.﴿

Accordingly, you have to reckon with yourself and strive against its whims wherever you are. It is narrated that `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) used to say in his Khutbahs (sermons): "Reckon with yourselves before you are reckoned with (by Allah), weigh your deeds before they are weighed, and get ready for being brought before Allah to be judged." Allah (Exalted be He) says regarding the Day of Judgment: ﴾That Day shall you be brought to Judgement, not a secret of you will be hidden.﴿

Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) also says: ﴾Help you one another in Al-Birr and At-Taqwâ (virtue, righteousness and piety); but do not help one another in sin and transgression.﴿ And: ﴾By Al-'Asr (the time).﴿ ﴾Verily, man is in loss,﴿ ﴾Except those who believe (in Islâmic Monotheism) and do righteous good deeds, and recommend one another to the truth [i.e. order one another to perform all kinds of good deeds (Al-Ma'ruf) which Allâh has ordained, and abstain from all kinds of sins and evil deeds (Al-Munkar which Allâh has forbidden], and recommend one another to patience (for the sufferings, harms, and injuries which one may encounter in Allâh's Cause during preaching His religion of Islâmic Monotheism or Jihâd).﴿

These are the believers' morals. They are friends who advise one another, help one another in piety and righteousness, and recommend one another to the truth and patience. If a person fails to follow such morals, this is a sign that their abidance by Din and Iman is defective.

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The Prophet (peace be upon him) also said: ﴾'A faithful believer to a faithful believer is like the bricks of a wall, enforcing each other. (While saying so the Prophet (peace be upon him) clasped his hands by interlacing his fingers.)﴿ And: ﴾The similitude of believers in regard to mutual love, affection, fellow-feeling is that of one body; when any limb of it aches, the whole body aches, because of sleeplessness and fever.﴿ Moreover, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said in a Sahih (authentic) Hadith: ﴾Whoever fulfills the needs of his brother/sister, Allah will fulfill his/her needs.﴿ (Agreed upon by Imams Al-Bukhari and Muslim and narrated on the authority of Ibn `Umar (may Allah be pleased with them both)). The Prophet (peace be upon him) also said: ﴾Allah helps His Servant as long as the Servant helps his/her brother/sister.﴿ (Related by Muslim in a Sahih (authentic) Hadith on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him)).

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O Servants of Allah! It is thus Wajib on you to reckon with yourselves and strive to acquire knowledge and understanding of the Din properly. You have to fulfill the rights of other male and female Muslims. You should not cheat or wrong other Muslims. Rather, you have to befriend your fellow Muslims in Allah's cause. No hatred, lying, cheating, disloyalty, or injustice is to be amongst Muslims. A Muslim has also to exert their efforts in teaching Din and Da`wah (calling to Islam) via educational circles, dialogues, writing, the radio, or the telephone.

These are the characteristics of male believers; they advise each other wherever they are. The same are also the characteristics of female believers as Allah (Glorified be He) says in Surah (Qur'anic chapter) Al-Tawbah: ﴾The believers, men and women, are Auliyâ' (helpers, supporters, friends, protectors) of one another; they enjoin (on the people) Al-Ma'rûf (i.e. Islâmic Monotheism and all that Islâm orders one to do), and forbid (people) from Al-Munkar (i.e. polytheism and disbelief of all kinds, and all that Islâm has forbidden); they perform As-Salât (Iqâmat-as-Salât), and give the Zakât, and obey Allâh and His Messenger. Allâh will have His Mercy on them.﴿ Allah (Exalted be He) thus promises to be merciful with His Servants who have sound Iman, support one another, and enjoin Ma`ruf (that which is judged as good, beneficial, or fitting by Islamic law and Muslims of sound intellect) and forbid Munkar (that which is unacceptable or disapproved of by Islamic law and Muslims of sound intellect). It is thus noted that befriending

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believers does not hinder enjoining them to do Ma`ruf and forbidding them from doing Munkar. Rather, befriending Muslims necessitates advising them.

Brotherhood in Islam thus necessities enjoining Ma`ruf and forbidding Munkar. It is also Wajib (obligatory) upon a Muslim to perform Salah (Prayer), give Zakah (obligatory charity), and obey Allah and His Messenger in all matters. Allah (Exalted be He) promises you, O Servants of Allah, that He will be merciful with you if you adopt such good morals and perform such noble deeds. Thus, it is clear now that the Din of Islam is based on both side; knowledge and actions, words and deeds. Islam is increased by knowledge, good deeds, and piety and vice versa.

Allah bestows His mercy upon the believers when they are pious and do righteous deeds. Allah (Exalted be He) bestows His mercy upon the believers in this world by granting them success and support, and in the hereafter by admitting them to Jannah (Paradise) and rescuing them from Hellfire. Allah (Glorified be He) collected all such good manners in four characteristics; Iman, acting upon it, recommending one another to the truth, and recommending one another to patience. These four characteristics are all the components of Din; whoever sticks to them firmly is the successful winner, whoever does not is the loser, and whoever is in a medium position will incur a loss equal to their negligence.

All people are in loss as Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾Verily, man is in loss,﴿ Both Jinn and mankind are thus in loss. There is only one exception for the next Ayah (Qur'anic verse) reads: ﴾Except those who believe (in Islâmic Monotheism) and do righteous good deeds, and recommend one another to the truth [i.e. order one another to perform all kinds of good deeds (Al-Ma'ruf) which Allâh has ordained, and abstain from all kinds of sins and evil deeds (Al-Munkar which Allâh has forbidden], and recommend one another to patience (for the sufferings, harms, and injuries which one may encounter in Allâh's Cause during preaching His religion of Islâmic Monotheism or Jihâd).﴿

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Those are the winners: ﴾those who believe﴿ i.e., they know the truth, believe that Allah (Glorified be He) is their true God, believe in the messengers, the Last Day, Jannah, Fire, Reckoning, and in all that Allah and His Messenger Muhammad tell us about.

They then prove their Iman by following Shari`ah (Islamic law): ﴾and do righteous good deeds﴿ In addition to their Iman, true believers also perform the obligations ordained by Allah (Glorified be He) upon them and avoid what He prohibits.

The foregoing Ayah then mentions a third characteristic (of those who are not in loss) that both Iman and righteous deeds comprise. Such a characteristic is recommending one another to the truth. Allah

(Exalted be He) mentions it specifically because of its great importance so that all Mukallaf (person meeting the conditions to be held legally accountable for their actions) people and believers know that they must be marked by such a characteristic.

The Ayah then mentions a fourth characteristic (of those who are not in loss) which is recommending one another to patience. This is because a believer can not learn, understand Din comprehensively, act upon their knowledge, and teach others and recommend them to the truth without seeking the help of Allah then being patient. Truly, whoever is not patient can not attain any goodness for Luqman said to his son: ﴾"O my son! Aqim-As-Salât (perform As-Salât), enjoin (on people) Al-Ma'rûf - (Islâmic Monotheism and all that is good), and forbid (people) from Al-Munkar (i.e. disbelief in the Oneness of Allâh, polytheism of all kinds and all that is evil and bad), and bear with patience whatever befalls you. Verily, these are some of the important commandments (ordered by Allâh with no exemption).﴿ Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) also says:

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﴾Only those who are patient shall receive their reward in full, without reckoning.﴿ And: ﴾and be patient. Surely, Allâh is with those who are As-Sâbirûn (the patient).﴿ Allah (Exalted be He) also says to His Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him):﴾ And endure you patiently (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه و سلم), your patience is not but from Allâh.﴿

Every believing men and women have to be marked with these four characteristics. Again, every believer has to believe truthfully in Allah (Glorified be He). They have to believe that Allah is the Only True God and Lord, the Creator, the All-Knower, and the Provider for His Servants. All Muslims also have to believe in Allah's Most Beautiful Names and Supreme Attributes. They have to believe that Allah has no rival and that nothing is comparable to him.

Believers also have to believe in all messengers; starting from Adam and Nuh (Noah, peace be upon him) and ending with the last Messenger, i.e., Muhammad (peace be upon him). We have to believe that Muhammad (peace be upon him) is the last Messenger and Prophet sent by Allah (Glorified be He) and that he was sent to all mankind and Jinn. Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): "O mankind! Verily, I am sent to you all as the Messenger of Allâh﴿ And: ﴾And We have not sent you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) except as a giver of glad tidings and a warner to all mankind﴿

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Mcoreover, Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says:﴾ And We have sent you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): not but as a mercy for the 'Alamîn (mankind, jinn and all that exists).﴿

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is thus the Messenger of Allah to both Jinn and mankind. He is a mercy to all that exists. He (peace be upon him) was sent as a giver of glad tidings and a warner to all Jinn and mankind. Allah (Exalted be He) says:﴾ O Prophet (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم)! Verily, We have sent you as witness, and a bearer of glad tidings, and a warner,﴿ ﴾And as one who invites to Allâh [Islâmic Monotheism, i.e. to worship none but Allâh (Alone)] by His Leave, and as a lamp spreading light (through your instructions from the Qur'ân and the Sunnah - the legal ways of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم).﴿

Along with Iman, true believers have to do good deeds, and advise and recommend one another to the truth.

Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾Verily, those who believe (in Islâmic Monotheism) and do righteous good deeds, for them are Gardens of Delight (Paradise).﴿ and: ﴾"Verily those who believe (in the Oneness

of Allâh - Islâmic Monotheism) and do righteous deeds, shall have the Gardens of Al-Firdaus (Paradise) for their entertainment.) He (Exalted be He) also says: (Verily, those who believe [in the Oneness of Allâh and in His Messenger (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم)] and work deeds of righteousness, the Most Gracious (Allâh) will bestow love for them (in the hearts of the believers).)

There are many other Ayahs (Qur'anic verses) to the same effect bearing in mind that deeds of righteousness comprise recommending one another to the truth and patience.

However, recommending one another to the truth is mentioned specifically in Surah Al-`Asr: (and recommend one another to the truth [i.e. order one another to perform all kinds of good deeds (Al-Ma'ruf) which Allâh has ordained, and abstain from all kinds of sins and evil deeds (Al-Munkar) which Allâh has forbidden], and recommend one another to patience (for the sufferings, harms, and injuries which one may encounter in Allâh's Cause during preaching His religion of Islâmic Monotheism or Jihâd).) This is part of Iman and righteous deeds. Students thus are to recommend one another to be patient in acting upon the truth. Each one of them is to advise the other when they study or in their assemblies. No student is to feel any rancor, hatred, or envy against the other. On the contrary, students are to gather, acquire knowledge, study their lessons, and search together while being sincere to Allah, loving and exalting Him, and willing to know and apply the truth. Moreover, whoever has knowledge of something should avail other students by it and should have the desire to increase them in goodness through his/her researches and studies.

Students have to come well-mannered to their teachers and willing to attain knowledge sincerely and truthfully. They have to care for their lessons before the class and after it. They have to ask their teachers politely about issues they are not sure about.

Another means of acquiring knowledge is paying attention to text books of which the greatest is the Glorious Qur'an. Students have to memorize it, contemplate its meanings, and recite it abundantly. Verily, the Qur'an is the strong rope of Allah and the main source of all noble knowledge. The Qur'an is the most Honorable Book and thus Muslims have to give it their utmost attention. They have to contemplate, understand, and act upon it.

You have to care about the Sunnah (whatever is reported from the Prophet) and memorize it as much as you can. You have, for example, to memorize -up to your ability- the Hadiths recorded in the books of Blugh Al-Maram, `Umdat Al-Ahkam, etc. Every student has to do so along with caring about the Glorious Qur'an, studying it, reflecting on its meanings, and referring to books of Tafsir (exegesis of the meanings of the Qur'an) regarding things you are not sure about.

In addition to all the foregoing, you have to study your lessons with your classmates and teachers sincerely, truthfully, and willingly not for Riya' (showing-off) or just to get a good reputation. When Allah (Exalted be He) knows that your intention is as good as mentioned above, He (Exalted be He) increases your memorization ability, grants you success, supports you, and bestows upon you an honorable mention amongst your fellow school mates.

My advice to all students is to be faithful to each other and to do so for the sake of Allah (Glorified be He). You have to also keep your time at night and in the daytime. You have to give some time to your study, some for your personal and family needs, some for sleep, etc. You have to organize and safeguard your time so that none of it is lost.

True believers are to control and strive with themselves at all times. They are to protect their organs against Allah's prohibitions and use them to obey Him for the Prophet (peace be upon him) says: (I

will declare war against whomever shows hostility to a pious worshipper of Mine. And the most beloved things with which My slave draws closer to Me are what I have enjoined upon them;

and My slave keeps on drawing closer to Me through performing Nafilahs(supererogatory acts of worship) until I love him...》

This is the condition of the believers. They care about Allah's obligations and avoid His prohibitions. They are also keen to draw closer to Allah through the Nafilahs that Allah makes easy for them to offer sincerely and willingly. They keep their time for acquiring knowledge and acting upon it. They are humble and flexible with their brothers/sisters while they are modest and compliant with their teachers. They use the best words to question them politely aiming at attaining knowledge and benefiting from them.

On the other hand, scholars (teachers) have to fear Allah and exert their utmost efforts to clarify the truth to seekers of knowledge (students). Scholars have to be patient and forbearing. They have to do their best to use clear words and style. Scholars have also to care about all that the students need so that students graduate while having proper knowledge and deep insight and trusting the knowledge that Allah bestowed upon them.

Both teachers and students have also to care about performing good deeds so that they become good examples to be followed by others. Offering good deeds is thus a way of teaching. A teacher educates his students by his good deeds and noble manners such as performing Salah (Prayer) on time and offering it perfectly, hastening to all

goodness, being humble, showing keenness to acquire knowledge, drawing the students to all that benefits them, etc. Students then imitate their teacher in their morals and deeds.

Students also have to be good models to be followed by their families and neighbors. Similarly, young students will also copy the good examples of old ones with regard to their morals and good deeds. Such is the condition of the seekers of knowledge as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: 《If Allah wants to do good to a person, He makes them comprehend Din (religion).》 And: 《Whoever travels on a road in search of knowledge, Allah will facilitate for them a way to Jannah (Paradise).》 Besides, scholars will get the same reward of the good deeds of whoever they taught. This is because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: 《Whoever guides to something good has a reward similar to that of its doer.》

Messengers will have the likeness of the reward of all their followers. The same applies to our Prophet and Messenger Muhammad (peace be upon him). Similarly, scholars will have the same reward as that of those whom Allah grants guidance because of those scholars. This applies also to students and many other people. This is because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: 《Whoever guides to something good will have a reward similar to that of its doer.》 And: 《When Allah wants to

do good to someone, He makes them comprehend Din.》 In addition, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said to `Aly when he sent him to Khaybar: 《If Allah guides aright even one person through you that is better for you than to possess the most valuable camels.》

Again, my advice to students is to fear Allah, recommend one another to the truth and patience, and

to do righteous deeds. Each one of you has to be a good example amongst their classmates, friends, and family of their good morals and deeds. I also advise teachers and scholars to fear Allah, to be patient with teaching people, and to be keen to educate them via pleasant ways such as humbleness, patience, and endurance. May Allah guide us all to whatever pleases Him, and protect us all against the evils of ourselves and our bad deeds! May Allah make His Din (religion) victorious and His Word supreme! May He make us all amongst the guiding and guided believers!

It is worth mentioning that teaching a person's family members is also Wajib (obligatory). Each student or scholar has thus to care for teaching and guiding their brothers, sisters, sons, daughters, etc., so that they will benefit from their knowledge, merits, and good deeds.

I ask Allah (Exalted be He) to grant us all success, guidance, and good end. May Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) increase us all in goodness, and keep us far away from deviating Fitnahs (temptations). Verily, Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) is the Most Bountiful, the Most Generous. May peace and blessings be upon His Servant and Messenger our Prophet Muhammad, his family, Companions, and all those who follow them in righteousness!

Questions after the lecture

Q: Your Eminence: What is the ruling on reading books that interpret the Attributes of Allah in a way that contradicts the method of Salaf (righteous predecessors) especially for those who did not study the science of `Aqidah (creed)? May Allah grant you success!

A: A Muslim should seek books of scholars known for following the creed of the Salaf such as the books of precedent scholars including `Abdullah ibn Ahmad, `Uthman ibn Sa`id Al-Darimy, Ibn Khuzaymah and the like, may Allah confer mercy upon them. Also, those who come after them of people of knowledge and insight such as Shaykh-ul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah, Ibn Al-Qayyim, and Al-Hafiz ibn Kathir as well as Imams of Da`wah (call to Islam) such as Sheikh Muhammad ibn `Abdul-Wahhab (may Allah be merciful with him) and other scholars who concerned themselves with creed and called to it.

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I recommend each person to contemplate the Qur'an for is the most important of all Islamic fundamentals and adhere to the Qur'an and Sunnah (whatever is reported from the Prophet) in matters of `Aqidah and other matters.

As for the other books, one can read them if necessary and take their advantage and notify of the mistakes in them whether books of precedent or later scholars.

Q: Dear Eminent Shaykh: What is the right way that a seeker of knowledge has to follow to attain the pleasure of Allah and to gain knowledge that benefits them and other Muslims? What are the things that promote the ability to memorize keep scholarly issues in one's mind without forgetting them?

A: The most important factors leading to this is that you fear your Lord by obeying Him, abandoning His disobedience, being sincere to Him, and asking Him to forgive and help you. You also have to care for your lessons and study and secure your time.

Another reason for good memorization of knowledge is to study with your colleagues and be keen to benefit from them. Individual reading and attendance of lectures should thus be accompanied by studying issues that you are uncertain about with good colleagues so that you comprehend them perfectly.

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Morals of scholars

All praise be to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds. May peace and blessings be upon the most honorable of prophets and messengers, our Prophet Muhammad, his family and Companions!

I would like to clarify the morals that should be adopted by scholars and what they should do out of following their great leader, the best example that should be followed, our Prophet Muhammad ibn `Abdullah (peace be upon him), the Messenger sent by Allah, and the leader of all the callers to Allah. I saw that the best title would be "The morals of scholars". It is known to anyone who has the least bit of knowledge that scholars are the successors of prophets, because prophets did not bequeath money; they left us only knowledge, and knowledge is what was indicated in the Qur'an and the Sunnah (whatever is reported from the Prophet). That is why `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her), when asked about the morals of the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾The manners of the Prophet (peace be upon him) was those of the Qur'an.﴿ This great word said by `Aishah

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(may Allah be pleased with her) guides us to the fact that his morals (peace be upon him) were following the commands of the Qur'an and avoiding the prohibitions in it, which entails adhering to the morals praised in the Qur'an and keeping away from the ones dispraised in the Qur'an. It is a great, comprehensive word. The scholars, Du`ah (callers to Islam), teachers and students should care about Allah's Book, derive the morals loved by Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) from it, and stick to them so that they become a permanent lifestyle for them wherever they are.

Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾Verily, this Qur'ân guides to that which is most just and right﴿ The Qur'an is the guide to the most just and right way. There is no greater aim for a Mu'min (believer) than being straight on the most just and right way. There is no doubt that this is the noblest and most important of objectives, which is the great moral character with which Allah praised His Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) in Surah Al-Qalam, as He (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾Nûn. [These letters (Nûn, etc.) are one of the miracles of the Qur'ân, and none but Allâh (Alone) knows their meanings]. By the pen and by what they (the angels) write (in the Records of men).﴿ ﴾You (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم), by the Grace of your Lord, are not mad.﴿ ﴾And Verily, for you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) will be an endless reward.﴿ ﴾And Verily, you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) are on an exalted (standard of) character.﴿

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Thus, all scholars and knowledge seekers should care about this moral and recite Allah's Book and work accordingly. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾(This is) a Book (the Qur'ân) which We have sent down to you, full of blessings, that they may ponder over its Verses, and that men of understanding may remember.﴿ Those are the people with sound minds whom Allah granted ability

to distinguish between Al-Haqq (the Truth) and falsehood, and between guidance and misguidance. A person who wants to acquire this great moral should refer to Allah's Book (Glorified and Exalted be He), recite it meditatively, study it with his colleagues, and ask scholars about problematic issues. They should also benefit from the reliable books of Tafsir (exegesis of the meanings of the Qura'n) and Sunnah (whatever is reported from the Prophet), as the Sunnah explains the Qur'an. All these things help greatly in following this straight path and be among the people who recite Allah's Book and apply it.

The Jews and the Christians had the Scriptures; and the deviant scholars of this Ummah (nation based on one creed) had the Qur'an, but what did they do with it?

They became the most evil of people due to their contradiction to Allah's Book, so Allah became angry with them. The same applies to their followers; any one who violates Allah's Book intentionally and follows the way of the misguided people of the Jews, the Christians and others, take the same ruling. The aim is to

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apply Allah's Book so that it becomes a reference for us in morals, just like it was a reference, guidance and cure for our predecessors. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) said to his Prophet (peace be upon him): ﴾Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه و سلم): "This is my way; I invite unto Allâh (i.e. to the Oneness of Allâh - Islâmic Monotheism) with sure knowledge, I and whosoever follows me (also must invite others to Allâh i.e. to the Oneness of Allâh - Islâmic Monotheism with sure knowledge). And Glorified and Exalted be Allâh (above all that they associate as partners with Him). And I am not of the Mushrikûn (polytheists, pagans, idolaters and disbelievers in the Oneness of Allâh; those who worship others along with Allâh or set up rivals or partners to Allâh)."﴿ This is also one of his morals (peace be upon him); it is also one of the morals of scholars, people of deep insight, people of Iman (Faith) and pious people. However, people of knowledge without Taqwa (fearing Allah as He should be feared) or Iman have no share in this, because one of the qualities of religious scholars is to call people to Allah's Way, to act upon their knowledge and to explain Al-Haqq based on evidence from Shari`ah (Islamic law), whether in sayings, deeds or `Aqidah (creed). Those are the guides of the people in the light of Allah's Book and the Sunnah of His Messenger; they would not exchange the Ayahs (Qur'anic verses) of Allah for worldly matters; they would rather convey to the people Allah's religion, guide them to Al-Haqq with which Allah sent His Prophet (peace be upon him), and bear the harm patiently in all cases. Thus, it is known that anyone who calls people to Allah ignorantly is not following the role model of the Prophet (peace be upon him) in morals. Such a person does not have the morals of scholars; they are rather criminals, because Allah (Glorified be He) considers speaking in His Name without knowledge more dangerous than

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Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship), because it leads to great corruption. In His Clear Book, Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): "(But) the things that my Lord has indeed forbidden are Al-Fawâhish (great evil sins and every kind of unlawful sexual intercourse) whether committed openly or secretly, sins (of all kinds), unrighteous oppression, joining partners (in worship) with Allâh for which He has given no authority, and saying things about Allâh of which you have no knowledge."﴿ He (Glorified be He) considers speaking in His Name without knowledge is one of the top prohibitions, because this Ayah includes graduation from the least to the most dangerous. Thus, the danger of speaking in Allah's Name without knowledge is known, and that it is one of the greatest forms of Munkar (that which is unacceptable or disapproved of by Islamic law and Muslims of sound intellect) and major sins, as it has evil consequences and leads to the misguidance of people. In another Ayah of Surah Al-Baqarah, Allah (Glorified be He) clarifies that

speaking in His Name without knowledge is called for by Satan. Thus, a knowledge seeker should not follow the way of Satan. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾O mankind! Eat of that which is lawful and good on the earth, and follow not the footsteps of Shaitan (Satan). Verily, he is to you an open enemy.﴿ ﴾He [Shaitân (Satan)] commands you only what is evil and Fahshâ (sinful), and that you should say against Allâh what you know not.﴿ Look at what Allah has mentioned

about this open enemy; he commands us to do evil and immoral deeds and to speak in the Name of Allah without knowledge, as he knows how dangerous it is to speak in the Name of Allah without knowledge. A person who speaks in the Name of Allah without knowledge allows prohibited things, prohibits lawful things, forbids Al-Haqq and commands falsehood out of ignorance. Thus, scholars and knowledge seekers should beware of speaking in the Name of Allah without knowledge; they should also pay attention to pieces of evidence from Shari`ah so that they are aware of what they call for, and so that they do not speak in the Name of Allah without knowledge. Those who know Allah well are the people who fear Allah most and observe the limits ordained by Him, according to His saying: ﴾It is only those who have knowledge among His slaves that fear Allâh.﴿ Every Muslim fears Allah, and every scholar fears Allah, but the degree of this fear is variable. The people who fear Allah most are the scholars who know Allah and His religion well, not scholars of medicine, engineering, geography or mathematics. They are the scholars who know Allah, His religion and that with which His Messenger (peace be upon him) was sent. On top of these come the Messengers of Allah (peace be upon them);

Messengers and Prophets are the top of scholars,

their role models and their Imams (leaders); and those who came after them are successors who inherited their knowledge and called for the same ideas. There is a Hadith that states, ﴾Scholars are the heirs of Prophets.﴿ Thus, the scholars, even in our recent times, should follow the way of their righteous ancestors in fearing Allah, revering His orders and prohibitions, and observing His limits. They should also support Al-Haqq, call for guidance and fear the blame of no one except Allah. Thus, their knowledge becomes useful; their conscience is cleared and people benefit from them. Allah's saying (Glorified be He), ﴾It is only those who have knowledge among His slaves that fear Allâh.﴿ refers to absolute fear which is felt by scholars, on top of whom come Messengers and Prophets, then the most perfect to the least perfect of scholars, according to the degree of their Taqwa, knowledge, strength of Iman and perfection of belief.

When some of the Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet) asked about the secret deeds that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) used to do, they felt they were little, and said to themselves, "How can we reach the stage of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him)? His past and future sins have been forgiven by Allah." It is mentioned in the Sahih (authentic) Hadith reported from `Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) that ﴾one of them said, "I will offer Salah (Prayer) continuously and never sleep". Another one said, "I will observe Sawm (fast) continuously and never break it". The third one said, "I will never sleep on a bed". The fourth one said, "I will never eat meat". When the Prophet (peace be upon him) heard of this, he gave a Khutbah (sermon) to the people, praised Allah and then said, "By Allah, I am the most pious one among you. However, I offer Salah and sleep; I observe Sawm and break it; and I marry women. Those who shun away my

Sunnah are not real Muslims.") The Prophet (peace be upon him) made it clear that he is the one who feared Allah most and knew what to avoid. The same applies to Messengers before him; they knew Allah most and feared Him most. Next to them come the scholars, each according to his rank. However, perfection of fear of Allah does not entail infallibility; any scholar might commit a mistake

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and return to Al-Haqq as soon as he conceives it. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, (All Banu Adam (human beings, descendents from Prophet Adam) commit sins, and the best among them are those who offer Tawbah (repentance).) A knowledge seeker should seek Al-Haqq (the Truth) through evidence, exert effort in this regard, ask Allah for help and assistance, and purify his intention. If he makes a mistake after all this, he will have one reward. Moreover, if he reaches the truth, he will get two rewards as authentically reported in the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him).

Fearing Allah entails observing the limits ordained by Him and following the Manhaj (methodology) of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him); whereas doing something extra is considered exceeding the proper limits, which is impermissible. A scholar is the one who observes the limits ordained by Allah in permissibility, prohibitions, doing and refraining. He should also be very careful not to speak in the Name of Allah without knowledge or work against what he knows, so that he does not resemble the Jews. Allah (Glorified be He) mentions some good qualities about the pious People of the Book to remind us of this. He (Exalted be He) says: (Indeed in their stories, there is a lesson for men of understanding.) In historical tales

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lie lessons. This fact is mentioned in Allah's sayings. He (Glorified be He) also says: (Not all of them are alike; a party of the people of the Scripture stand for the right, they recite the Verses of Allâh during the hours of the night, prostrating themselves in prayer.) (They believe in Allâh and the Last Day; they enjoin Al-Ma'rûf (Islâmic Monotheism, and following Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) and forbid Al-Munkar (polytheism, disbelief and opposing Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم); and they hasten in (all) good works; and they are among the righteous.)

This is an example of their good deeds and qualities mentioned by Allah (Glorified be He) to us so that we may follow them and imitate those good people. At the end of Surah Al-`Imran, Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) also says: (And there are, certainly, among the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians), those who believe in Allâh and in that which has been revealed to you, and in that which has been revealed to them, humbling themselves before Allâh. They do not sell the Verses of Allâh for a little price, for them is a reward with their Lord. Surely, Allâh is Swift in account.) These are the good qualities adopted by the righteous people of the Book and those whom Allah guided among their scholars. They believe in Allah; they feel Khushu` (the heart being attuned to the act of worship); they are obedient to Allah; they humiliate themselves before Him; they do not exchange the Ayahs of Allah for a little price; and they do not deny the truth like what their misguided scholars did when they denied the biography of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and much of Al-Haqq

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for their worldly enjoyments.

As for the people of knowledge and Iman and those who fear Allah among the ancestors and the

latecomers, they declare Al-Haqq and do not exchange the Ayahs of Allah for a little price. One of their great deeds is clarifying Al-Haqq, referring to it, calling people to it and warning against falsehood. They also seek Allah's reward and fear His punishment (Glorified and Exalted be He). Allah also says: ﴾Shall he then who knows that what has been revealed unto you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه و سلم) from your Lord is the truth be like him who is blind? But it is only the men of understanding that pay heed.﴿ And: ﴾Say: "Are those who know equal to those who know not?" It is only men of understanding who will remember (i.e. get a lesson from Allâh's Signs and Verses).﴿ In those two Ayahs, Allah (Glorified be He) points out that those who know Al-Haqq revealed by Allah, which includes guidance and integrity, are not equal to those who are too blind to be guided to Al-Haqq for their corruption of thoughts and heart; they are not alike. That is why Allah says: ﴾It is only men of understanding who will remember (i.e. get a lesson from Allâh's Signs and Verses).﴿ Allah makes it clear that remembrance and reflection are made by those who have sound minds.

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Then, He mentions their great qualities saying: ﴾Those who fulfil the Covenant of Allâh and break not the Mîthâq (bond, treaty, covenant).﴿ Those are the qualities of the people of knowledge and Iman; they are those who fulfill Allah's covenant entrusted to them; stick to His religion in sayings, deeds and `Aqidah; they do not break the covenant, but rather respect it. They join that which Allah has ordered to be joined, such as Istiqamah (integrity), sincerity to Allah and following the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him); and they fear Allah and the terrible reckoning. Both should be observed: Tawhid (monotheism) and following the Messenger of Allah. Both should be joined: testifying that there is no deity but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. They also follow Iman by deeds, such as dutifulness to parents and maintaining the ties of kinship, and they fear Allah in a way that helps them obey Allah and protects them from committing sins; it is real fear, not just claims, that affects their hearts and makes them attuned to Allah, respectful to the limits ordained by Him, abstaining from what He prohibits, and obedient to Him.

Thus, the people of knowledge and Iman fear Allah in a fruitful way that leads to Al-Haqq and avoiding falsehood. They also

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﴾and dread the terrible reckoning (i.e. abstain from all kinds of sins and evil deeds which Allâh has forbidden and perform all kinds of good deeds which Allâh has ordained).﴿ This is out of the perfection of their fear; they fear terrible reckoning, so they prepare themselves and keep their Istiqamah out of fear of terrible reckoning on the Day of Resurrection.

Allah (Glorified be He) then mentions the sixth and seventh qualities in what He (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾And those who remain patient, seeking their Lord's Countenance, perform As-Salât (Iqâmat-as-Salât)﴿ They remained patient in their obedience to Allah and refrained from committing things prohibited by Allah, not out of patience or Riya' (showing-off), but for the sake of Allah and to get closer to Him. The people of Iman and knowledge endure hardships in obeying Allah, abstaining from sins, conveying Allah's Message, offering Salah and not neglecting anything enjoined by Allah in this great act of `Ibadah (worship), which is the main pillar of Islam; they rather offer it as enjoined by Allah.

Allah (Glorified be He) mentions the eighth and the ninth qualities in His saying: ﴾and spend out of that which We have bestowed on them, secretly and openly, and defend evil with good﴿ This means that they spend secretly and in public to please Him and do good to the people, seeking Allah's bounty and mercy.

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They also pay Zakah (obligatory charity) and spend in charity of the money given to them by Allah (Glorified be He): ﴾and defend evil with good﴿ They repel misdeeds with good deeds out of their perfect patience, endurance and restraint of anger. This is the status of scholars and righteous people, according to Allah's saying (Exalted be He): ﴾for such there is a good end.﴿ The good end is interpreted by Allah's saying: ﴾'Adn (Eden) Paradise (everlasting Gardens), which they shall enter and (also) those who acted righteously from among their fathers, and their wives, and their offspring.﴿ Their reward for those deeds entails that Allah encloses them, their parents, their progeny and their spouses with His bounty and mercy (Glorified and Exalted be He). Istiqamah on Allah's orders, fulfilling His rights, enjoining Ma`ruf (that which is judged as good, beneficial, or fitting by Islamic law and Muslims of sound intellect) and prohibiting Munkar, steadfastness on Al-Haqq, being patient in it and meeting an evil deed with a good one lead to the righteousness of a person, their parents, spouse and progeny. They gather in the abode of honor, and angels visit and greet them. One of the greatest blessings of Allah on a man is making him a cause for the guidance of his parents, wife and progeny. A woman may also be a cause for the guidance of her husband, parents and progeny. It is concluded from the noble Ayah that parents and spouses' admittance to Jannah

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with their relatives is due to their righteousness, not merely kinship. It is Istiqamah and exerting maximum effort in obeying Allah which is the greatest mediator for a person, which makes their relatives, spouse and progeny gathered in the abode of honor. This noble Ayah resembles that of Surah Saba' in which Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾And it is not your wealth, nor your children that bring you nearer to Us (i.e. please Allâh), but only he who believes (in the Islâmic Monotheism), and does righteous deeds (will please Us); as for such, there will be twofold reward for what they did, and they will reside in the high dwellings (Paradise) in peace and security.﴿

Allah (Exalted be He) also says in Surah Al-Hujurat: ﴾O mankind! We have created you from a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know one another. Verily, the most honourable of you with Allâh is that (believer) who has At-Taqwâ [i.e. he is one of the Muttaqûn (the pious. See V.2:2)]. Verily, Allâh is All-Knowing, All-Aware.﴿ Such noble Ayahs and others that carry the same meaning indicate that reaching high ranks, winning Jannah, safety from Allah's punishment and wrath are not achieved by wishes, supplications or lineages. It is only achieved by Allah's guidance and mercy, through enduring obedience to Allah, restraining oneself from what He prohibits, seeking what pleases Him (Glorified and Exalted be He), being sincerely devoted to Him in deeds, and asking Him to grant us success

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and guidance, while enduring hardships and difficulties in reaching Al-Haqq.

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Thus, great goodness is achieved by them and they win Jannah. The people of Iman, knowledge and guidance should follow these great morals so that they win the good end, and their final destination will be Jannah. There must be patience, sincerity and honesty. Allah (Exalted be He) says in Surah Al-Insan: ﴾And their recompense shall be Paradise, and silken garments, because they were patient.﴿ He (Glorified be He) says in Surah Al-Mu'minun: ﴾Verily I have rewarded them this Day for their

patience: they are indeed the ones that are successful.) In Surah Al-Furqan, He describes the great attributes of His good servants saying: (Those will be rewarded with the highest place (in Paradise) because of their patience. Therein they shall be met with greetings and the word of peace and respect.)

These are the good qualities described in His saying: (And the (faithful) slaves of the Most Gracious (Allâh) are those who walk on the earth in humility and sedateness) They reached this rank by enduring obedience to Allah, refraining from what is prohibited by Him, and exercising patience in calamities. We should take care of this matter and prepare for it well. A knowledge seeker should know that patience is a must; and that great deeds and goodness are not achieved by mere claims and wishes without work and patience.

I ask Allah by virtue of His Names and Attributes to guide us and all the Muslims to useful knowledge and righteous deeds. May He grant us all the morals of the people of knowledge and Iman, those of Messengers and their righteous followers! May He grant us and all the Muslims more useful knowledge, righteous deeds and deep insight! May He protect us all from the evils of ourselves and our misdeeds! May He (Glorified be He) guide those in charge of Muslims everywhere to all what pleases Him and benefits the people! May He guide the leaders of Muslims and help them obey Him and His Messenger! May He guide them to rule according to His Shari`ah, abide by it, refer to it and beware of what contradicts it! May He also set right the affairs of the Muslims everywhere; grant them comprehension of religion; help them remember Him, thank Him and worship Him well; and protect us and all the Muslims from what contradicts His Shari`ah! He (Glorified and Exalted be He) is the Only One Capable of doing so.

May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon His servant and Messenger, our Prophet Muhammad, his family, Companions and those who followed them in righteousness until the Day of Judgment!

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136- The importance of Fiqh

All praise be to Allah and peace and blessings be upon our Truthful and Trustworthy, Prophet Muhammad, his family, Companions and those guided by his guidance and who follow his path until the Day of Judgment.

It is of great importance for people to know more about Fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence), evidence of the ordinances and Fuqaha' (Muslim jurists) who are the reference in every matter. It is the duty of scholars to do their best in stressing this necessity to people. In fact, Allah (Glorified be He) has created Jinn (creatures created from fire) and mankind to worship Him Alone, and the full meaning of this worship cannot be understood without knowing more about Fiqh, its evidence, the rulings of Islam and its evidence. This knowledge can easily be attained through knowing Muslim scholars who are the main reference regarding Hadith and Fiqh.

Scholars are the heirs of the prophets, and the prophets left no Dinar or Dirham, but they left knowledge and anyone who takes it will be among the fortunate. Being knowledgeable about the religion and knowing the rulings of the Qur'an and Sunnah (whatever is reported from the Prophet) leads a servant to happiness and is a sign of their success.

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Moreover, Allah (Exalted be He) shows us the great status and high rank of Muslim scholars who know Allah and His Shari`ah (Islamic law) and obey Allah (Exalted be He) and His Prophet (peace be upon him). Muslim scholars are lights that guide others to the right path. They hold fast to Qur'an and Sunnah, that is why Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says about them: ﴾Allâh bears witness that Lâ ilâha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He), and the angels, and those having knowledge (also give this witness); (He always) maintains His creation in Justice. Lâ ilâha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He), the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.﴿ and, ﴾Allâh will exalt in degree those of you who believe, and those who have been granted knowledge.﴿

Allah (Glorified be He) also says: ﴾It is only those who have knowledge among His slaves that fear Allâh.﴿ It was authentically reported that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: ﴾When Allah wants to do good to a person, He makes them comprehend Din (religion).﴿ (Agreed upon by Imams Al-Bukhari and Muslim). This important Hadith shows us the excellence of comprehending Din for comprehending it includes understanding the Qur'an, the Sunnah and Islam. Islam covers the basics of Shari`ah, Allah's Ordainments, His Prohibitions, a servant's duty toward Allah and people and fear of Allah, as well as glorifying Him and being aware of Him.In fact,

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the first step toward attaining knowledge is fearing Allah, honoring His sanctities, and being aware of Him in all deeds. Anyone who does not fear or be aware of Allah in their deeds, all their knowledge

will be worthless. However, true beneficial knowledge and understanding of Din that leads to happiness is that which instills awe of Allah in a Muslim's heart, directs them to honor Allah's sanctities, pushes them to obey Allah's Orders and abstain from His Prohibitions and urges them to call to Allah and to clarify Shari`ah to people. So, anyone who is granted comprehension in religion in this way, Allah indeed wants to do good to them. On the other hand, anyone who is deprived of these blessings will be among the ignorant, misguided and negligent who renounce attaining the knowledge that Allah makes obligatory. They will be among those whom Allah (Exalted be He) does not want to do good. Further, Allah (Exalted be He) talks about the Kafirs (disbelievers) who turn away from the purpose of their creation, to teach us that it is our duty, as Muslims, to hasten and comprehend Din and ask about any unclear matter. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾But those who disbelieve turn away from that whereof they are warned.﴿ and, ﴾And who does more wrong than he who is reminded of the Ayât (proofs, evidence, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) of his Lord, but turns away from them, forgetting what (deeds) his hands have sent forth.﴿

Consequently, it is the duty of a Muslim to seek to attain knowledge of Din, to attend to, reflect on and benefit from the Qur'an

and to pay great attention to, study, apply and memorize the Sunnah as much as possible. When a person neglects these two basics, this is an indication that Allah (Exalted be He) does not want to do good to them. They are doomed since their hearts are corrupt, deviating from the path of guidance.

We ask Allah to protect us and keep us away from whatever displeases Him. Dear Muslims, it is incumbent upon us to learn our Din and know its rulings and to attend to, meditate, reflect on, recite and apply the Qur'an. In addition, we have to give great care to, memorize, apply and study the

Sunnah, as well as ask about anything that is unclear. Muslims should ask those who are more knowledgeable to find out the answers to their questions. Allah (Glorified be He) says, ﴿So ask the people of the Reminder, if you do not know.﴾ Moreover, a person has to attend Halaqahs (learning circles) and benefit from them and study with other knowledgeable Muslims to benefit from them and develop themselves. In this way, they will attain comprehension in religion

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and avoid the characteristics of the negligent and heedless. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾When Allah wants to do good to a person, He makes them comprehend Din.﴿ Based on the previous discussion, a Muslim realizes the merits of Muslim scholars, who have attained much goodness, achieved victory and found the path leading to happiness and guidance. Anyone who is deprived of knowledge is deprived of much goodness while anyone who is endowed with beneficial knowledge is indeed endowed with the means leading to happiness, provided that they fear Allah in their knowledge.

The peak of the knowledgeable scholars - after the messengers - are the Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet). They received knowledge perfectly from the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him), studied the Qur'an and Sunnah and transmitted what they learned to those after them among the Tabi`un (Followers, the generation after the Companions of the Prophet). The Sahabah transmitted the Qur'an to those who came after them with its pronunciation, exegesis, recitation and the Prophet's explanations. They also conveyed the Hadith they heard or saw from the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) with the utmost honesty and sincerity. Thiqat (trustworthy) narrators among

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the Tabi`un transmitted Hadith to one another until they reached us preserved without the least doubt in them. Allah thus provides evidence to His Servants by allowing knowledge to be transmitted by Thiqat narrators from the Sahabah from the Prophet (peace be upon him), to call them to the Truth, warn them against falsehood and clarify to them that they are created to worship and obey Allah Alone. Thus, Muslims should invoke Allah's Mercy, Forgiveness and Pleasure for those who preceded them for having benefited from their knowledge and useful compilations. Indeed, they have attained much goodness and knowledge. They comprehended the Qur'an and Sunnah and transmitted whatever knowledge they received. That is why, as Muslims, we should honor them and be grateful for their efforts and for preserving knowledge and conveying it to people. Let us make use of their useful books and compilations to understand the meanings of the Qur'an and Hadith.

In addition, scholars played an important role in preserving the Sunnah and transmitting it intact to us.

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The Sunnah includes explanations of the Qur'an, it explains in detail matters mentioned in general in the Qur'an and it contains the rulings revealed by Jibril (Gabriel) to the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him). This means that the blessed Sunnah is Allah's Revelation to the Prophet. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) has granted the Prophet (peace be upon him) the Qur'an and the like of it, as he himself said: ﴾I have been granted the Qur'an and something like it.﴿

Therefore, scholars are required to convey and explain the Sunnah to people and to guide them to the meanings of the Qur'an and Hadith in lessons, lectures, sermons and knowledge circles. They should guide, teach and direct people in all possible ways.

For this purpose, Muslim scholars have traveled to various countries. They contacted scholars in every city to benefit and learn. For example, during the first generation, some Sahabah traveled from Madinah to Egypt, Levant (the region covering Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and Palestine), Iraq Yemen, etc. to learn and convey knowledge. Sahabah (may Allah be pleased with them) thus used to travel from one country to another seeking knowledge about a Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet) which they have missed.

When they heard that someone knew it, they would travel to him to benefit from his knowledge and then convey it to other Muslims.

After that, the Tabi`un would do the same and travel from one place to the other seeking knowledge. They comprehended the religion and studied at the hands of the Sahabah asking them about every unclear matter. The Tabi`un acted upon their knowledge and transmitted it to those who came after them. Later, they compiled great books in the fields of Hadith, Tafsir (exegesis of the meanings of the Qur'an), Arabic Language and other sciences of Shari`ah. With the help of these books, scholars were able to guide people, lead them to the right path and teach them how to understand the Qur'an and preserve and understand the Sunnah. Hence, people abide by the teachings of the Qur'an and Sunnah with sure knowledge, guidance and light. May Allah reward our scholars good, double their reward and benefit us from their knowledge! We seek Allah's Refuge from the evil within ourselves and from our evil deeds! Moreover, it is of great importance to attend lectures of knowledge to learn directly from scholars. It is related in a Hadith, that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴿When you pass by the gardens of Paradise, avail yourselves of them. The Companions asked: What are the gardens of Paradise, O Messenger of Allah? He replied: The circles of Dhikr (remembrance of Allah).﴾ He (peace be upon him) also

said: ﴿Whoever travels on a road in search of knowledge, Allah will place them on a path leading to Paradise.﴾ Besides, Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴿So ask the people of the Reminder, if you do not know.﴾ All of these are important points related to Fiqh and Fuqaha'. You should know that knowledge is sought in Masjids (mosques) and by traveling to other countries known for their upright scholars. These are among the ways of acquiring knowledge and its doer will be among those mentioned in the Hadith: ﴿Whoever travels on a road in search of knowledge, Allah will place them on a path leading to Paradise.﴾

Anyone who asks a scholar, travels to a scholar in another country, visits a scholar at home or goes to him at the Masjid (mosque) has indeed gone on a path seeking knowledge. Further, scholars talked about the methods of preserving knowledge and mentioned writing it down and recording it, as our Salaf (righteous predecessors) and those after them did (may Allah be merciful with them all). These are some of the ways of acquiring knowledge and attaining it, in addition to moving from a country to another, from a Masjid to another, from a Halaqah to another and from a scholar's house to another, seeking to understand Din. All of these efforts fall under the Hadith: ﴿Whoever travels on a road in search of knowledge, Allah will cause him to travel on one of the roads of Paradise.﴾

May Allah grant us success! May peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family, and Companions!

Knowledge and the morals of knowledgeable people

Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds! May the good end be for the pious! May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon His servant and Messenger, the best of His creation who was entrusted with His Revelation, our Prophet and Imam, Muhammad ibn `Abdullah, his family, Companions, and those who follow in his footsteps until the Day of Resurrection.

We have just heard the recitation of blessed Ayahs (Qur'anic verses) that imply admonitions and lessons. The Ayahs show that Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) creates and chooses whatever He wills. They tell clearly that Allah (Exalted be He) is the All-Knower of His Servants' conditions, their hidden intentions, and exposed deeds. The Ayahs that have just been recited state that Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) is the Only One to be praised in this world and in the Hereafter, that our turning will be to Him, that He is the Only One Who manages the interests of His Servants day and night, and that all this is a manifestation of Allah's Mercy (Glorified and Exalted be He).

Verily, we have thus to contemplate the meanings of the Glorious Qur'an. We have to do so in a way that reflects our real desire to attain beneficial knowledge and our true belief in the Qur'an; the True Word of Allah, revealed but not created, and that Allah (Exalted be He) initiated it and it will return to Him. It is of great importance that people of knowledge contemplate this Holy Book, i.e. the Qur'an and to pay their utmost attention to it while intending to know the Will of their Lord (Glorified and Exalted be He) and act upon it as Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says:

﴾(This is) a Book (the Qur'ân) which We have sent down to you, full of blessings, that they may ponder over its Verses, and that men of understanding may remember.﴿ and: ﴾Do they not then think deeply in the Qur'ân, or are their hearts locked up (from understanding it)?﴿ People of knowledge have to give their full concern to the Qur'an while feeling Allah's saying: ﴾Verily, this Qur'ân guides to that which is most just and right﴿ and: ﴾Say: "It is for those who believe, a guide and a healing."﴿

My advice to you before I start my speech is thus to care for the Holy Qur'an by contemplating it, reciting it frequently, and acting upon it for it was revealed to be applied not just to be recited. May Allah grant us all success.

As for my speech today, it is, as has been presented, on: "Knowledge and the morals of knowledgeable people," I hope it can be briefed.

Indeed, the virtues and merits of knowledge are well known to everyone. The noblest thing that one can ask for and the best thing a seeker can strive to attain is the Knowledge of Shari`ah (Islamic law). Knowledge consists of many branches, but according to Muslim scholars, the meaning of knowledge is the knowledge of the Shari`ah. This is the intended meaning of knowledge in the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger (peace be upon him). In the absolute sense, it is knowledge regarding Allah, His Names and Attributes, knowledge of His rights over His creation, and what He (Glorified and Exalted be He) has legislated for them.

It is the detailed knowledge of the path that leads to Allah; knowledge of the purpose of our creation; and the end which Allah's Servants will result in, in the Hereafter.

The knowledge of the Shari`ah is the best of sciences worth acquiring because through it Allah is recognized and acknowledged, and by it He is worshiped. One who possesses this knowledge knows what Allah has made lawful and what He has prohibited; what pleases Him and what evokes His anger.

With this knowledge a person knows the end of this life. From amongst the people, are those who will enter Jannah (Paradise), and the rest (which are the majority) will result in a place of disgrace and humiliation. The people of knowledge have cautioned us about this and explained that knowledge is confined to this meaning. Amongst the scholars who indicated this is Al-Qady ibn Abu Al-`Izz, the commentator of `Aqidah Al-Tahawiyyah, at the beginning of his commentary. Others have also referred to it, such as Ibn Al-Qayyim, Shaykh-ul-Islam ibn Taymiyyah, and some other scholars.

It is very clear that the merits and virtues of knowledge vary, depending on the extent of one's adherence to it. The greatest and most excellent knowledge is that which pertains to Allah, His Names, and His Attributes, and this knowledge is known as `Aqidah (creed). Indeed to Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) belongs the best example, which is the highest description in every aspect of His Essence, Names, Attributes and Actions.

Following this is that which is related to the rights of Allah over His creation and what He has prescribed upon them. Following this is what supports and bonds it in understanding such as knowledge of the principles of Arabic, Islamic terminology, Usul-ul-Fiqh (principles of Islamic jurisprudence),

Hadith Terminology and other sciences which are connected to this knowledge, which assist it in both understanding and precision.

The biography of the Prophet (peace be upon him), Islamic history, biography of the narrators of Hadith and of the scholars of Islam are also part of this knowledge.

Allah has honored and extolled the people who possess this knowledge and has raised their status high. He made them bear witness to His Oneness with sincere devotion. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾Allâh bears witness that Lâ ilâha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He), and the angels, and those having knowledge (also give this witness); (He always) maintains His creation in Justice. Lâ ilâha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He), the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.﴿ The people of knowledge bear witness to His Oneness along with the angels. The angels (peace be upon them) and the people of knowledge, affirm Allah's Oneness with sincere devotion toward Him, that He is the Lord of the worlds, the true deity worthy of worship and that worship of anyone besides Him is Batil (null and void). This affirmation in itself is a sufficient proof to show their high status due to the fact that Allah made them testify to His Oneness and the right for His worship. He (Glorified and Exalted be He) explained clearly that none is equal to them: ﴾Say: "Are those who know equal to those who know not?" It is only men of understanding who will remember (i.e. get a lesson from Allâh's Signs and Verses).﴿ Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) also says:

﴾Shall he then who knows that what has been revealed unto you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه و سلم) from your Lord is the truth be like him who is blind? But it is only the men of understanding that

pay heed.》

Therefore, the people of knowledge and the ignorant are not alike. The person, who knows that what Allah has revealed is the truth, guidance and a way to success, is not equal to one who has been blinded to this way and to this knowledge. There is an immense difference between the knowledgeable and the ignorant. It is the difference between one who knows the truth and obtains insight through its light and acts according to its guidance until he meets his Lord achieving success with nobility, and one who is blind to this way and follows his desires taking the path of Satan.

The two groups are not similar. Allah (Glorified be He) has clearly stated that He raises the ranks of the people of knowledge due to their effect upon the people and the great benefit that people draw from them. Thus, some of the people of knowledge have said, "What is more beneficial than their effect upon the people! What is more harmful than the people's effect upon them!"

Their beneficial effects direct the people toward righteousness, guide them to the truth, and show them guidance. Allah thanks them and the believers thank them for their meritorious actions. At the head of all the scholars are the prophets (peace be upon them) for they are the guides. Next to the prophets are the Du`ah (callers to Islam) for they are the most knowledgeable and learned of people - after the prophets - with regards to Allah and His Shari`ah. They are the best followers in the messengers' footsteps and are well acquainted with that which the Messengers were sent with (i.e., the revelation). They are the best to invite people to Islam in the best way, with patience.

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Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: 《Allâh will exalt in degree those of you who believe, and those who have been granted knowledge.》 and: 《And that was Our Proof which We gave Ibrâhîm (Abraham) against his people. We raise whom We will in degrees.》 Moreover, Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) explained that the people of knowledge fear Him as He ought to be feared, although all the believers, generally speaking, fear Allah. But the true and complete fear of Allah is present only among the scholars, at the head of them being the Messengers (peace be upon him): 《It is only those who have knowledge among His slaves that fear Allâh.》 That is, complete and perfect fear.

The scholars are those who have the knowledge of Allah, His Names, His Attributes and His Shari`ah (Islamic law), which He sent the Messengers with. Hence, when some people expressed how huge the burden of acquiring Islamic knowledge is to Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) by saying: 《Indeed I am the one who fears Allah the most amongst you, and the most pious of you...》

The scholars are the most fearful of Allah among mankind due to their knowledge of Allah, His Din (religion) of Islam, His Names and His Attributes. They are the most eager among men for the Truth depending on the extent of their knowledge of Allah. Further above them and the most perfect are the Messengers,

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as they fear Allah the most. There are many Hadiths showing the virtues and merits of knowledge.

To give some examples, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: 《Whoever follows a path to seek knowledge, Allah will make the path to Jannah (Paradise) easy for them.》 (Related by Muslim in his Sahih (authentic) Book of Hadith, may Allah be merciful with him). This shows us the great excellence of the seekers of knowledge. For whoever sets right his intention in seeking knowledge and desires only Allah's pleasure, is on a road to salvation and happiness. Knowledge should be sought for the right objectives and for its implementation not for the sake of Riya' (showing-off), gaining reputation, or for the sake of anything else; rather, a person learns it to be acquainted with his Din, to have insight into what Allah has made incumbent upon them, to strive to bring the people

out of darkness and into the light, so they seek knowledge, act upon it and teach others the good objectives that Muslims are ordered to take care of. Every path -whether literally or not- that he takes in search of knowledge is a way to Jannah. The journey from a country to another; and going from a Halaqah (learning circle) to another; and from a Masjid (Mosque) to another for the sole intention of seeking knowledge. These are from the ways of acquiring knowledge, likewise reading and studying Islamic books are also ways of seeking knowledge.

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A seeker of knowledge is concerned with all these paths that lead to knowledge. He seeks it, desiring the pleasure of His Lord (Glorified and Exalted be He). He wants to seek Allah's pleasure and the Hereafter; he wants to understand and reflect upon His Din; he wants to know what Allah has made incumbent upon him and what He has prohibited him from; he wants to know his Lord with deep insight, then act accordingly; he wants to rescue people; he wants to be amongst the callers striving for the Truth; and he wants to guide people to Allah through knowledge. So wherever he turns he is in great excellence while having these good intentions - even his sleep is a path to Jannah - if he sleeps in order to strengthen himself to seek knowledge, or to study or memorize, then his sleep is regarded as worship, contrary to a person who has an evil intention, for he is in great danger. It was authentically reported that the Messenger (peace be upon him) said: ﴾Whoever acquires (religious) knowledge, which is (normally) acquired to gain the Pleasure of Allah, (for the sole reason) to secure worldly comforts will not even smell the fragrance of Jannah on the Day of Resurrection (i.e., will not enter Paradise).﴿ (Related by Abu Dawud, may Allah be merciful with him, with a good Sanad (chain of narrators)).

This is a great threat for a person who has an evil intention. It is reported that the Messenger (peace be upon him) said: ﴾Whoever acquires knowledge in order to compete with the scholars or dispute with the ignorant or attract the attention of people to him will enter Hellfire.﴿

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Knowledge is acquired by studying, then implementing it for Allah's sake because He has ordered it and made it a means by which the Truth is manifested. It is reported in a Sahih Hadith: ﴾Three types of people will be admitted to the Hellfire first. Amongst them: The one who seeks knowledge or recites Qur'an not for the sake of Allah, but in order for it to be said: He is a scholar or he is a good reciter of the Qur'an.﴿ There is neither might nor power except with Allah!

O Servant of Allah! Dear seeker of knowledge! You must be sincere in your worship, intending it solely for Allah. You must be keen in seeking knowledge with perseverance, then act upon that which knowledge necessitates, since what is required is to act upon, not that you become a scholar or achieve a high class degree. Indeed the main purpose of seeking knowledge is that you act accordingly, guide people to do good, consequently becoming the successors to the Messengers (peace be upon them) in calling people to the Truth. It is authentically reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾If Allah wants to do good to a person, He makes them comprehend Din (religion).﴿ (Agreed upon by Imams Al-Bukhari and Muslim).

This shows the merits of knowledge. Among the signs of goodness, happiness, and success, are that if Allah wants to do good to His Servant He makes him understand the Din so that he can distinguish Truth from falsehood,

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and guidance from deviation, in order to recognize his Lord by His Names, Attributes and His great rights, so that he knows the recompense of the Awliya' (pious people) and the enemies of Allah.

The reward of the Awliya' is Jannah, near to their Lord, looking at His Face in the Abode of Honor (Jannah).

On the other hand, the destination of the enemies of Allah is in a place of torture, punishment, humiliation screened from seeing Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He).

Thus, we come to know the excellence of knowledge and that it is the best and most noble thing for anyone who seeks knowledge with a good intention. Through knowledge, a person comes to know the best and greatest obligation which is to worship Allah alone with sincere devotion. This knowledge makes him aware of what Allah has made incumbent upon His Servants, which is a great obligation. There is no happiness nor salvation for a Servant of Allah except through Him, then through knowing, holding fast, and firmly adhering to these obligations.

The scholars who disseminate knowledge are the chosen people and the best of people on earth. At the head of them are the Messengers and the Prophets (peace be upon them). They are the prime example to be followed, the foundation of Da`wah (calling to Islam), knowledge and excellence. After them are the people of knowledge at different levels: the person who is most knowledgeable with regards to Allah, His Names, His Attributes and most perfect in his deeds and Da`wah, is the closest of people to the Messengers with respect to their status and position in Jannah. The people of knowledge are the leaders of this world; they are its light; they have been preferred above everyone else, they direct people to the way of happiness, they guide them to the means of

salvation, they lead them to that which pleases Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) and to His Mercy and keeps them far from that which evokes His Anger and Punishment.

Scholars are the heirs of the Prophets; Imams of the people after the prophets; they guide and direct the people to Allah and teach them His Din; and they have noble manners and praiseworthy attributes. They are the scholars of the Truth; scholars of guidance and successors to the prophets; they fear Allah much and are constantly observing their actions, and pay great importance to what He orders and forbids. These are their great characteristics because they have trodden the path of the prophets, followed their way in calling to Allah, with deep insight, in warning people against the means that cause His Anger, and in striving toward the good sayings or actions and abandoning the evil sayings or actions which they are aware of. Next to the prophets, they are the example and the model to be imitated in their great characteristics, praiseworthy attributes, and excellent deeds. They teach others and act accordingly and guide their students to the noblest manners and to the right path.

As previously mentioned the knowledge of Shari`ah is the knowledge of the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger (peace be upon him) and all that facilitates its understanding. It is obligatory upon the people of knowledge to adhere to this great principle, call people to it, and direct their students to it. Their objective should always be the knowledge legislated by Allah and His Messenger and acting accordingly, directing and guiding people to it. Divisions and disputes are not permissible,

nor to invite people to join a group or party or to take the opinion of someone. Rather, it is obligatory that the Da`wah is to be to Allah and His Messenger; to the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger; and not to the ideology or call of someone; nor to a certain person's group or the opinion of another. It is obligatory upon Muslims to follow the same way and have one goal - and that is to adhere to the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger (peace be upon him).

As for the differences of opinions between the people of knowledge with regard to the Four Madhhabs (jurisprudential schools), i.e. Hanafy, Maliky, Shafi`y, and Hanbaly, it is obligatory to adopt the opinion which is the closest to what Allah and His Messenger legislated in the Qur'an or the Hadith or to that which the principles of Shari`ah acknowledge.

This is the way of the Imams as it was the way of the Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet, may Allah be pleased with them and please them) who were the Imams after the Messenger (peace be upon him). They were the most knowledgeable people with regard to Allah. They were the best, the most knowledgeable, and well-mannered among people.

They held different opinions with regard to some issues, but still their Da`wah and their way was the same; calling to the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of the Messenger (peace be upon him). Likewise, the Tabi`un (Followers, the generation after the Companions of the Prophet) and their successors, such as Imam Malik, Abu Hanifah, Al-Shafi`y, Ahmad, and other guiding Imams such as Al-Awza`y, Al-Thawry, Ibn `Uyaynah, Ishaq ibn Rahwayh, etc. Their Da`wah was the same: calling to the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger (peace be upon him),

they forbade their students from imitating them by saying, "Resort to the main legal sources upon which we depend," i.e., the Qur'an and the Sunnah.

Whoever is ignorant of the Truth, they have to ask the people of knowledge who are recognized with virtue, sound belief, and good reputation. They have to respect the scholars, acknowledge their superiority and ask Allah to grant them success and great reward as they have preceded them in great blessing. They (may Allah be merciful with them) guided, and clarified the way. The Companions of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and the prominent scholars who followed them have preceded with their knowledge and Da`wah to Allah. Everyone has to realize their status and merit and overlook their mistakes, take them as an example in seeking knowledge and in calling to Allah, giving priority to the sayings of Allah and His Messenger (peace be upon him) over those of others, being patient upon this, and running toward righteous actions. Every Muslim has to follow the Companions and their followers in all these aspects and overlook their mistakes. However, it is not permissible to cling stubbornly and fanatically to one of them. Nor to say that someone is absolutely correct. Rather, a person has to believe that everyone at times errs and at times hits the right. What is correct is that which is in conformity to the sayings of Allah, His Messenger (peace be upon him), and Ijma` (consensus of scholars). If the scholars hold different opinions, it is compulsory to refer to Allah and His Messenger (peace be upon him). Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says:

﴿(And) if you differ in anything amongst yourselves, refer it to Allâh and His Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم)﴾ and: ﴿And in whatsoever you differ, the decision thereof is with Allâh (He is the ruling Judge).﴾ This is what both early and recent scholars have stated.

It is not permissible to cling fanatically to the opinion of a certain person, likewise it is forbidden to stubbornly attach oneself to one group or party. These are all from the recent mistakes which many people commit.

It is essential that the goal of the Muslims is one and that is to follow the Qur'an and Sunnah in all instances: in adversity and prosperity, at times of hardship and ease, and when travelling or not. When the people of knowledge hold different opinions, then a person has to adopt the view which is rightly proven without being prejudiced against anyone.

As for common people, they have to ask people of knowledge and follow among them the closest to truth and uprightness. They have to ask their scholars about Allah's Din, then the latter are to teach

them and guide them to the truth according to Qur'an, Sunnah, and Ijma`.

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A scholar is distinguished by his perseverance, his Taqwa (fearing Allah as He should be feared), and striving to what Allah has made obligatory and keeping away from what Allah and His Messenger have forbidden.

These are the characteristics of a scholar, whether they are teachers, judges, Du`ah (callers to Islam), etc. They have to be examples and models in righteousness; act upon their knowledge; fear Allah wherever they may be; and guide people to goodness. Scholars have to be good examples for their students, family members, neighbors and others who know him. This is because people take scholars along with their sayings and actions - which are in accordance with the Din of Allah - as an example.

Knowledge seekers warn against leniency in regard to Allah's Obligations. Seekers of knowledge have to beware of being careless of what Allah has made obligatory and from falling into things that Allah has forbidden - for others will imitate them. Likewise seekers of knowledge have to not be neglectful of the Sunnah and to have not to commit Makruh (reprehensible) things. It is important that they care for reviving the Sunnah, even though a particular act may not be compulsory, in order to encourage the people to follow it, and that they be examples for them. Seekers of knowledge have to stay away from the prohibited things and the doubtful matters so that people do not imitate them.

Seekers of knowledge are of great significance whereas the people of knowledge are the select amongst the creation. Upon them are obligations and responsibilities over and above everyone else. The Messenger (peace be upon him) said: ﴾Every one of you is a guardian and is responsible for their charges.﴿

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People of knowledge are guardians and guides. They have to show concern for society as it is their charge. It is obligatory on them to carry out such responsibility and fulfill the rights of Allah in this regard. They have to guide people to the way of salvation and warn them against ways of destruction. They have to implant in people's hearts the love for Allah and His Messenger, being firm on following His Din, yearn for Jannah and His Mercy, and avoid Hellfire for it is an evil abode. Verily, it is obligatory to warn against Hellfire and Scholars and seekers of knowledge are more entitled to such an obligation. They strive to please Allah, refrain from disobeying Him, and call upon Him. They do not exceed the boundaries, but take the middle way. They abstain from those things, which Allah forbids and dislikes, so that Muslims may imitate them and be influenced by them wherever they are. I ask Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) by His Most Beautiful Names and Supreme Attributes to guide us all to all that pleases Him, to purify our hearts and actions, to make us rightly guided, righteous, and from amongst the reformers. I ask Him to make His Din victorious, and to make His Word prevail. I ask Him to grant success to Muslim leaders, to guide their retinue, and to bless them to rule by Allah's Shar` (Law) and discard every thing that contradicts it.

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As for other sciences, they have their own significance and importance, like mining, agriculture, farming, and other beneficial industries. It is a collective obligation to learn some of these industries depending upon the requirements of Muslims. Rulers have to order and help people learn what they need for their welfare, and to prepare them against their enemies. The actions of the Servant of Allah will be regarded as `Ibadah (worship) whenever their intention is good. If they do an action

without an intention, then it is permissible. I mean the different kinds of permissible industries, i.e., mining, agriculture, farming, etc.

All of these sciences are required, along with good intentions; which render them kinds of `Ibadah. Sometimes looking after the foregoing sciences/industries may be regarded as collective obligation if necessity dictates. It is compulsory on the rulers to appoint the necessary people to learn such knowledge. The importance of doing so depends upon the situation, which differs according to intention and necessity.

As for acquiring knowledge of Shari`ah, this is obligatory. Since Allah created Jinn and mankind to worship and fear Him, this is only to be achieved through Islamic knowledge, i.e. knowledge of Qur'an and Sunnah; as mentioned above.

It is a duty of seekers of knowledge to understand and study Din, to learn and reflect upon what Allah prescribes, to know the `Aqidah (creed) of the Salafiyyah (those following the way of the righteous predecessors) which the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him),

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his Companions, and their followers adopted in righteousness. Such `Aqidah is to believe in Allah, His Messengers, His Names and His Attributes in a manner that suits Allah's Majesty without Tahrif (distortion of the meaning), Ta`til (denial of Allah's Attributes), Takyif (questioning Allah's Attributes), or Tamthil (likening Allah's Attributes to those of His Creation).

This was the approach and the way of the people of knowledge, as it was the approach of the messengers (peace be upon them), their Companions, and their successors who followed them in righteousness.

I ask Allah to grant you success; to guide them to all that pleases him; and to make you return to your countries while attaining highest degrees of success, piety, knowledge, and Iman (Faith/belief). May Allah make you reasons for guiding people, and setting aright Muslims' conditions. Verily, Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) is capable of doing all things. May peace and blessings be upon Servant and Messenger our Prophet Muhammad, his family, Companions, and all those who follow them in righteousness.

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138- Clarifying the prerequisites of knowledge

Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds! May the good end be for the pious! May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon His servant and Messenger, the best of His creation who was entrusted with His Revelation, our Prophet and Imam, Muhammad ibn `Abdullah, his family, Companions, and those who follow in his footsteps until the Day of Resurrection.

Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) created all creatures to worship Him Alone and not to associate any partner with Him. Allah did not create Jinn and mankind in vain or for no purpose but created them for a very important matter, i.e. to worship and exalt Him and to yield to His Shari`ah (Islamic law). Allah (Exalted be He) thus says: ﴾And I (Allâh) created not the jinn and mankind except that they should worship Me (Alone).﴿ ﴾I seek not any provision from them (i.e. provision for themselves or for My creatures) nor do I ask that they should feed Me (i.e. feed themselves or My creatures).﴿ ﴾Verily, Allâh is the All-Provider, Owner of Power, the Most Strong.﴿ Allah (Exalted be He) commands His Servants to accomplish such `Ibadah (worship). He (Exalted be He) says: ﴾O mankind! Worship your Lord (Allâh), Who created you and those who were before you so that you may become Al-Muttaqûn (the pious - See V.2:2).﴿ and: ﴾Worship Allâh and join none with Him (in worship)﴿ He

(Exalted be He) also says: ﴾And your Lord has decreed﴿ i.e., and your Lord has commanded:

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﴾that you worship none but Him.﴿ Moreover, Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾And they were commanded not, but that they should worship Allâh, and worship none but Him Alone (abstaining from ascribing partners to Him), and perform As-Salât (Iqâmat-as-Salât) and give Zakât, and that is the right religion.﴿ Besides, Allah (Glorified be He) sent His Messengers to convey the same command. He (Exalted be He) says: ﴾And verily, We have sent among every Ummah (community, nation) a Messenger (proclaiming): "Worship Allâh (Alone), and avoid (or keep away from) Tâghût (all false deities i.e. do not worship Tâghût besides Allâh)."﴿ and: ﴾And We did not send any Messenger before you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) but We revealed to him (saying): Lâ ilâha illa Ana [none has the right to be worshipped but I (Allâh)], so worship Me (Alone and none else)."﴿ This is `Ibadah and this is the purpose for which mankind and Jinn were created. Again, the goal behind creating mankind and Jinn is to worship and exalt Allah, to surrender to His Shari`ah, and to follow His Messengers. Allah did not create mankind and Jinn in vain. He (Glorified be He) is not in need of them. Rather, Allah (Exalted be He) is the Self-Sufficient Who is not in need of anyone or anything whatsoever. He (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾O mankind! it is you who stand in need of Allâh. But Allâh is Rich (Free of all needs), Worthy of all praise.﴿ ﴾If He willed, He could destroy you and bring about a new creation.﴿ and: ﴾And We created not the heaven and the earth and all that is between them without purpose! That is the consideration of those who disbelieve! Then woe to those who disbelieve (in Islâmic Monotheism) from the Fire!﴿

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Allah did not create the heavens and the Earth without purpose. Rather, He (Glorified be He) created them for a great wisdom. Allah (Exalted be He) thus condemns those who are not aware of this saying: ﴾Does man think that he will be left neglected (without being punished or rewarded for the obligatory duties enjoined by his Lord Allâh on him)?﴿ ,i.e. does man think that he will be left overlooked and disregarded? Nay, man is given commands and prohibitions. Allah (Exalted be He) also says: ﴾"Did you think that We had created you in play (without any purpose), and that you would not be brought back to Us?"﴿ Allah (Glorified be He) thus blamed such people for such thinking. He clarified that He (Exalted be He) created His Servants to worship Him, neither in vain nor for no purpose. However, the Mukallafs (those meeting the conditions to be held legally accountable for their actions) have to know and learn how to worship their Lord. O servant of Allah, you have to know about this `Ibadah for which you are created along with its evidence so that you can worship Allah with deep insight. You are thus commanded to acquire knowledge. Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾So know (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) that, Lâ ilâha illallâh (none has the right to be worshipped but Allâh), and ask forgiveness for your sin﴿ and: ﴾that you may know that Allâh has power over all things, and that Allâh surrounds all things in (His) Knowledge.﴿ Each Mukallaf (person meeting the conditions to be held legally accountable for their actions) has thus to comprehend Din. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾If Allah wants to do good to a person,

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He makes them comprehend the Din.﴿ and: ﴾The example of guidance and knowledge with which Allah has sent me is like a rain falling on the earth, some of which was fertile soil that absorbed rain

water and brought forth vegetation and grass in abundance. Another portion of it was hard and held the rain water and Allah benefited the people with it and they utilized it for drinking, making their animals drink from it and for irrigation of the land for cultivation. A portion of it was barren which could neither hold the water nor bring forth vegetation 'then that land gave no benefits'. The first is the example of the person who comprehends Allah's Din and gets benefit 'from the knowledge' which Allah has revealed through me 'the Prophet' and learns and then teaches others.) This is the likeness of Muslim scholars. They are like fertile soil that absorbs rain water, brings forth vegetation and grass in abundance, and holds water that people can benefit from. They comprehend Islamic knowledge and convey it to people. Nevertheless, most of the people are like barren soil that neither holds water nor brings forth vegetation, i.e. such people do not benefit from what Allah (Exalted be He) revealed to messengers. Allah (Exalted be He) says: (And most of mankind will not believe even if you desire it eagerly.) and: (And if you obey most of those on the earth, they will mislead you far away from Allâh's Path.)

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Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) also says: (And indeed Iblîs (Satan) did prove true his thought about them: and they followed him, all except a group of true believers (in the Oneness of Allâh).) This is the condition of most of the people. They turn away from the Din of Allah, the teachings that the messengers conveyed, and the purpose of their creation. They thus resemble cattle as Allah (Exalted be He) says: (Or do you think that most of them hear or understand? They are only like cattle - nay, they are even farther astray from the Path (i.e. even worse than cattle).) It is, of course, not appropriate for a believer or a reasonable person to resemble cattle. Instead, people have to enquire about, understand, learn, and comprehend Din to know the obligations and prohibitions of Allah and to avoid being like cattle. Allah (Exalted be He) says: (So ask the people of the Reminder, if you do not know.) Accordingly, you - O servants of Allah - are commanded to comprehend and learn Din to know Allah's obligations, prohibitions, and the `Ibadah for which you are created. The concerned `Ibadah is Islam itself, guidance,

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obedience to Allah and His Messenger (peace be upon him). It is righteousness and piety. This is explained in some other Ayahs (Qur'anic verses). Allah (Exalted be He) thus says: (Truly, the religion with Allâh is Islâm) and:(O you who believe! Believe in Allâh, and His Messenger (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم)) and: (O mankind! Be dutiful to your Lord) and: (whereas there has surely come to them the Guidance from their Lord!) and: (but Al-Birr (is the quality of the one) who fears Allâh.) Allah (Exalted be He) also says: (Verily, the Abrâr (the pious believers of Islamic Monotheism) will be in Delight (Paradise);) All the foregoing Ayahs show that `Ibadah for which you are created, O Servant of Allah, is Islam. It is Iman (Faith/belief), guidance, obedience to Allah and His Messenger, righteousness, and piety. `Ibadah in fact is to believe in Tawhid (belief in the Oneness of Allah/ monotheism), to be sincere to Allah (Exalted be He), to perform His obligations, abandon His prohibitions, and safeguard His limits. This is the `Ibadah for which you are created and that you are commanded to practice. It is the `Ibadah for which Allah sent His messengers and descended His Books. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ((This is) a Book, the Verses whereof are perfected (in every sphere of knowledge), and then explained in detail from One (Allâh), Who is All-Wise, Well-Acquainted (with all things).) (Worship none but Allâh)

and: ﴾The revelation of this Book (the Qur'ân) is from Allâh, the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.﴿ ﴾Verily We have sent down the Book to you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) in truth: So worship Allâh (Alone) by doing religious deeds sincerely for Allâh's sake only.﴿ ﴾Surely the religion (i.e. the worship and the obedience) is for Allâh only.﴿ Allah (Exalted be He) also says: ﴾And this is a blessed Book (the Qur'ân) which We have sent down, so follow it and fear Allâh (i.e. do not disobey His Orders), that you may receive mercy (i.e. be saved from the torment of Hell).﴿ It is thus Wajib (obligatory) on all Mukallafs whether men or women, Jinn or mankind, Arab or non-Arab to learn the Din of Allah and know entirely this `Ibadah for which they are created. They have to do so via the glorious Qur'an and the purified Sunnah (whatever is reported from the Prophet). Qur'an is the origin of all goodness, the most truthful, the greatest, and the most honorable Book. We thus have to learn, contemplate, and master it. Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾Do they not then think deeply in the Qur'ân, or are their hearts locked up (from understanding it)?﴿ and: ﴾This (Qur'an) is a Message for mankind (and a clear proof against them), in order that they may be warned thereby, and that they may know that He is the only One Ilâh (God - Allâh) - (none has the right to be worshipped but Allâh) - and that men of understanding may take heed.﴿ Allah

(Glorified and Exalted be He) also says: ﴾And this is a blessed Book (the Qur'ân) which We have sent down, so follow it﴿ and: ﴾(This is) a Book (the Qur'ân) which We have sent down to you, full of blessings, that they may ponder over its Verses, and that men of understanding may remember.﴿ and: ﴾this Qur'ân has been revealed to me that I may therewith warn you and whomsoever it may reach.﴿ O Servant of Allah! You are commanded to contemplate, understand, and learn Qur'an to perceive Allah's obligations and prohibitions. You are ordered as well to follow, extol, and comprehend Sunnah which represents all the sayings, acts, and tacit approvals which are authentically reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him). Sunnah is the Hikmah (wisdom) that Allah revealed to His Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) along with the Qur'an. Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾He who obeys the Messenger (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم), has indeed obeyed Allâh﴿ and: ﴾And whatsoever the Messenger (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) gives you, take it; and whatsoever he forbids you, abstain (from it).﴿ and: ﴾O you who believe! Obey Allâh and obey the Messenger (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم), and those of you (Muslims) who are in authority. (And) if you differ in anything amongst yourselves, refer it to Allâh and His Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم)﴿

He (Exalted be He) also says: ﴾O you who believe! Obey Allâh and obey the Messenger (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم)﴿ O Servant of Allah! You are commanded to obey Allah and His Messenger and this can not be done unless you learn and grasp Din so that you know the obligations and prohibitions of Allah and worship Allah with deep insight. The most important thing to be known about Din is the Shahadah (Testimony of Faith) that there is no deity but Allah and that Muhammad is the (last) Messenger of Allah. Such Shahadah is the origin of Din. It is the first thing to which the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) called people. In fact, the first thing to which both our Prophet Muhammad and all other prophets (peace be upon them all) called people was Tawhid, i.e. to declare that La ilaha illa Allah (there is no deity but Allah). Our Prophet (peace be upon him) also called people to believe in him as Allah's Messenger. The origin of Din is thus to bear truthful testimony that La ilaha

illa Allah and to bear a similar testimony that Muhammad, i.e. son of `Abdullah son of `Abdul-Muttalib is the true Messenger of Allah. These two testimonies are the origin of Din. No Islam,

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Iman, piety, or righteousness can not be attained unless you say these two testimonies truthfully while knowing and being certain of them. However, if a person says these testimonies untruthfully; they are considered hypocrites. Allah (Glorified be He) says regarding hypocrites: ﴾Verily, the hypocrites will be in the lowest depth (grade) of the Fire; no helper will you find for them.﴿ The hypocrites thus say the Shahadah by their tongues but not by their hearts. O you Servant of Allah! You have thus to oppose the hypocrites and bear an ascertained testimony based on knowledge, certainty, and truthfulness that there is no deity but Allah and that Muhammad (peace be upon him) is Allah's Servant and Messenger that was sent by guidance and true Din (religion) to the whole mankind. Allah (Glorified be He) says: ﴾Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): "O mankind! Verily, I am sent to you all as the Messenger of Allâh﴿ and: ﴾And We have not sent you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) except as a giver of glad tidings and a warner to all mankind﴿ and: ﴾And We have sent you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): not but as a mercy for the 'Alamîn (mankind, jinn and all that exists).﴿ He (Glorified and Exalted be He) also says: ﴾Blessed be He Who sent down the criterion (of right and wrong, i.e. this Qur'ân) to His slave (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) that he may be a warner to the 'Alamîn (mankind and jinn).﴿ You have thus to bear the Shahadah truthfully and sincerely.

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You have also to apply the prerequisites of the Shahadah, i.e. Tawhid, believing in Allah and worshiping Him Alone according to the way and manner that was followed by the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him). A (good) deed has thus to meet two conditions:

First: Sincerity to Allah.

Second: Conformity to the Shari`ah that was conveyed by the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him). Such conditions have to be fulfilled with regard to all forms of `Ibadah such as Salah (Prayer), Hajj, Sawm (Fast), etc. All kinds of `Ibadah have to be performed sincerely to Allah (Glorified be He) and are to be done in the way conveyed by the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him): ﴾Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم to mankind): "If you (really) love Allâh then follow me (i.e. accept Islâmic Monotheism, follow the Qur'ân and the Sunnah), Allâh will love you and forgive you your sins.﴿ It is worth mentioning that the Prophet (peace be upon him) continued for ten years in Makkah calling his people to Tawhid and belief in Allah and His Messenger even before Salah was prescribed. He kept telling his people: ﴾O my people, say: "There is no One Who has the right to be worshiped but Allah and turn in repentance to Him."﴿ In his homeland, the Prophet (peace be upon him) called the tribe of Quraysh as well as other tribes to say: La ilaha illa Allah (there is no deity but Allah). Nevertheless, only few people believed while the majority was arrogant enough not to accept the truth. Later, the five obligatory Salahs (Prayers) were prescribed in Makkah; before the Prophet's migration (to Madinah). The Prophet (peace be upon him) thus kept on performing Salah in Makkah for three years then he (peace be upon him) migrated to Madinah.

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Consequently, the reasonable Mukallaf knows that this Din has to be learned and comprehended. Without learning and grasping Din, firm conviction, and truthfulness; no Da`wah (calling to Islam)

can be made. The Da`wah of Islam, Iman (Faith/belief), Tawhid, and compliance with the Prophet's way can not be fruitful unless it is accompanied by truthfulness, knowledge, and acting upon knowledge. You have thus to acquire knowledge, to comprehend Din, and to act upon the saying of the Prophet (peace be upon him): (I have been commanded to fight against people until they testify that there is no god but Allah, and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, perform the Salah, and pay Zakah (obligatory charity). If they do that, their blood and property are guaranteed protection on my behalf except when justified by law, and their affairs rest with Allah.) The Prophet (peace be upon him) also said: (I have been ordered to fight against the people until they testify that none has the right to be worshiped but Allah and that I am The Messenger of Allah, so if they say that, then they save their lives and property from me unless they violate the due right of such testimony.) The due right of the concerned Shahadah (testimony) is to perform the obligations of Allah (Exalted be He) and to abandon His prohibitions. This is the right of declaring that La ilaha illa Allah; to perform Salah, pay Zakah, offer Hajj, and observe Sawm, to do whatever Allah commands, and to abstain from whatever He prohibits. All this is the right of La ilaha illa Allah.

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The Prophet (peace be upon him) clarified that the apparent Pillars of Islam are five. He (peace be upon him) said: (Islam was based on five pillars: testimony that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah; performing Salah, giving Zakah; observing Sawm in Ramadan; and performing Hajj (pilgrimage).) These are the apparent Pillars of Islam. However, every act of Din constitutes one part of Islam. So, acts like Jihad (fighting/striving in the Cause of Allah), propagation of virtue and the prevention of vice, abandoning sins, and all other commands of Allah are all embodied in Islam. Yet, the apparent Pillars of Islam are five as mentioned above. Besides, the Prophet (peace be upon him) explained the Pillars of Iman while answering Jibril (Gabriel, peace be upon him) saying: ((Iman is) To have faith in Allah, His Angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Day of Resurrection and the Divine destiny whether good or bad.) These are the Pillars of Iman. The hidden Pillars of Iman are six: To believe in Allah, that He is your true Lord and God, and that He is the Lord of the whole universe; the Creator, the All-Knower. Iman is also to believe in the angels,

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that they are Servants of Allah that are created by Him (Exalted be He) from light. They are obedient to Allah, they do not precede Allah in word, and they act by His command (peace be upon them). The chiefs amongst them are Jibril, Mika'il (Michael), and Israfil (peace be upon them all). Jibril is the ambassador between Allah (Exalted be He) and His messengers.

The next Pillar of Iman is to believe in Allah's Books that were sent to different prophets. O Servants of Allah! Allah revealed to His prophets Books that you have to believe in. You have thus to believe that Allah revealed Books calling people to believe in Tawhid and to obey their Lord. Some of these Books are the Tawrah (Torah), Injil (Gospel), Zabur (Book revealed to Prophet Dawud [David]), and the Qur'an. The Qur'an is the noblest and final revealed Book. It was revealed to the final Prophet, i.e. Muhammad (peace be upon him).

In addition, you have to believe in all the messengers. You have to believe that Allah sent the messengers to His Servants to call them to Tawhid and to obey Allah and His Messengers. The first prophet was Adam (peace be upon him) who was sent to call his offspring to Tawhid and obedience to Allah. Afterwards, the practice of Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship) started for the first time on earth so Allah (Glorified be He) sent Nuh (Noah, peace be upon him) who was the first messenger to be sent after the appearance of Shirk on earth. Similarly, Allah (Exalted

be He) sent Hud, Salih, Lut (Lot), Shu'ayb, Musa (Moses), Harun (Aaron), `Isa (Jesus), Dawud (David), Sulayman (Solomon) and other messengers and prophets (peace be upon them all) with one message; to give glad tidings to whoever worships Allah Alone and obeys Him and to warn whoever refuses to do so. Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾And verily, We have sent among every Ummah (community, nation) a Messenger (proclaiming): "Worship Allâh (Alone), and avoid (or keep away from) Tâghût (all false deities i.e. do not worship Tâghût besides Allâh)."﴿

All the prophets and messengers thus call to the same things, i.e. Tawhid and obedience to Allah. likewise, they all forbid Shirk. Moreover, you have to believe in the Last Day which is the Day of Resurrection after death. Resurrection is a must, for this world is not a place of eternal stay. This world is an abode of deception, it is not of real pleasure. Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾The life of this world is only the enjoyment of deception (a deceiving thing).﴿ Life in this world is followed by death and this is followed by recompense and reckoning. O Servant of Allah! You are waiting for a great affair; the Last Day, Recompense, Reckoning, Jannah (Paradise), and Fire! You are created in this world to get ready to move to the abode of bliss. You have thus to qualify yourself to this. You have to beware of qualifying yourself to the abode of humiliation, i.e. Hellfire. Allah prepared Jannah for the pious and Hellfire for Kafirs (disbelievers). This world is the place for offering good deeds. It is like a farm (where we plant but harvest in the Hereafter). On the other hand, the Hereafter is the abode of recompense. On the Last Day; the Day of Resurrection, Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) will resurrect people from their graves and from all other places even the depths of seas. Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾(And remember) the Day when He will gather you (all) on the Day of Gathering, — that will be the Day of mutual loss and gain (i.e. loss for the disbelievers as they will enter the Hell-fire and gain for the believers as they will enter Paradise).﴿ He (may He be Glorified

and Exalted) also says: ﴾And they ask you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) to inform them (saying): "Is it true (i.e. the torment and the establishment of the Hour - the Day of Resurrection)?" Say: "Yes! By my Lord! It is the very truth!﴿ On the Day of Resurrection, Allah (Exalted be He) gathers all mankind and Jinn in one place, reckons them, and rewards them for their deeds. Some people will have their balances (of good deeds) heavy and some will have them light. Some people will take the Books of their deeds with their right hands and some will take them with their left. O Servant of Allah! You are thus in danger. You have to prepare yourself for such a Day. This is to be done by fearing and obeying Allah, copying His Messenger (peace be upon him), and yielding to His Shari`ah. Finally, the sixth Pillar of Iman is to believe in Predestination; that Allah (Glorified be He) knows and predestines everything before it happens. He (Glorified be He) says: ﴾Verily, We have created all things with Qadar (Divine Preordainments of all things before their creation as written in the Book of Decrees Al-Lauh Al-Mahfûz).﴿ and: ﴾Know you not that Allâh knows all that is in the heaven and on the earth? Verily, it is (all) in the Book (Al-Lauh-al-Mahfûz). Verily that is easy for Allâh.﴿ Allah (Exalted be He) also says: ﴾No calamity befalls on the earth or in yourselves but it is inscribed in the Book of Decrees (Al-Lauh Al-Mahfûz) before We bring it into existence.﴿ Moreover, the Prophet (peace be upon him) says: ﴾Verily,

Allah had decreed the destinies of all created beings fifty thousands years before He created the

heavens and the earth, and His `Arsh (Throne) was on the water.) You have to believe in Predestination. You have to believe that Allah predestines all things. He (Glorified be He) knows the deeds that dwellers of Jannah and Fire will perform. Beware thus O brother of being negligent of the Din, turning away from it, or being unaware of its rulings. Remember that you will meet Allah and stand before Him. Allah (Exalted be He) says: (O man! Verily, you are returning towards your Lord with your deeds and actions (good or bad), a sure returning, and you will meet (the results of your deeds which you did).) You have to prepare yourself for meeting your Lord by believing in Tawhid, obeying Allah, following His Shari`ah (Islamic law), and extolling His commands and prohibitions. Remember also that Allah (Exalted be He) says: (And I (Allâh) created not the jinn and mankind except that they should worship Me (Alone).) Remember that you will be judged according to your deeds. If they are good, you will be rewarded but if they are bad; you will be punished. Do not be careless, follow your whims, or obey Satan. Be keen to be amongst the few number of people who will be rescued and beware of being amongst the large number of people who will be ruined. Allah (Exalted be He) says: (And indeed Iblîs (Satan) did prove true his thought about them: and they followed him, all except a group of true believers (in the Oneness of Allâh).)

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(And most of mankind will not believe even if you desire it eagerly.) You have to be serious, active, truthful, patient, forbearing, and invoke Allah. You have to ask Allah to help you, grant you success, and guide you to His Straight Path. You direly need your Lord for you do not control the affairs but Allah Alone does so. Allah (Exalted be He) says: (Not upon you (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) is their guidance, but Allâh guides whom He wills) and:(Verily you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) guide not whom you like, but Allâh guides whom He wills.) Guidance to success and accepting the truth is only for Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He), not for any human being. However, guidance of conveying and demonstrating (the message) is in the hands of messengers and their followers. Messengers are guides to Allah's Straight Path. Allah (Exalted be He) thus says regarding His Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him): (And verily, you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه و سلم) are indeed guiding (mankind) to the Straight Path (i.e. Allâh's Religion of Islâmic Monotheism).) ,i.e. you show people the Straight Path and tell them about it. The same is done by scholars and Du`ah (callers to Islam).

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Regarding guidance as meaning success, accepting the truth, and being content with it; this is decided by Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He). You have thus to always supplicate to Allah and ask Him to guide you to His Straight Path, to help you remember, thank, and worship Him perfectly. You have to invoke Allah to guide you to all that pleases Him and to protect you against the evils of yourself, your evil desires, and Satan. Verily, Allah Alone guides whomever He likes! He Alone grants guidance and success! Invoke Him (Exalted be He) at all times, while making Sujud (Prostration), before finishing Salah, in the middle of night, and toward the end of night for the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: (The nearest a servant is to his Lord is while doing Sujud (prostration), so increase Du`a' (supplication).) Since Du`a' in Sujud is most likely to be answered, you have thus - O Servant of Allah - to do your best in making Du`a' while offering Sujud. In addition, when the Prophet (peace be upon him) taught his Companions Tahiyyat (a recitation in the sitting position in the second/ last unit of Prayer), he (peace be upon him) said: (Then let him (any Muslim male or female) choose from Du`a' what he loves best and supplicate with it.) The Prophet (peace be upon him) also said: (Our Lord descends every night to the world sky

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when the last third portion of the night begins. He says: 'Is there any supplicant to answer his/her supplication? Is there any seeker of My Favor to give him/her? Is there any seeker for forgiveness to forgive him/her?' until the dawn emerges.) Such descent is a descent that suits the Majesty of Allah for Allah's Attributes (may He be Exlated) are not comparable to any of his creatures. It is a descent that no one knows its manner except Him (Glorified and Exalted be He). Similarly, Allah (Exalted be He) rose over `Arsh (Allah's Throne) in a way that suits His Majesty for none of Allah's Attributes is comparable to any of His creatures. Allah (Exalted be He) says: (The Most Gracious (Allâh) rose over (Istawâ) the (Mighty) Throne (in a manner that suits His Majesty).) Allah (may He be Praised) is over `Arsh but His Knowledge is everywhere and Allah descends every night to the world sky in the way He wills and says: (Is there any supplicant to answer his/her supplication? Is there any seeker of My Favor to give him/her? Is there any seeker for forgiveness to forgive him/her) According to another wording: (Is there any supplicant to answer his/her supplication? Is there any repentant to accept his repentance? Is there any asker to give him/her what they ask? until the dawn emerges.) Beseech

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Allah - O brother - at such times. Ask Allah earnestly in your Sujud, in the middle of the night and toward its end, and before finishing Salah. Invoke Allah to grant you success and guidance. Ask Him (Exalted be He) to teach you all that is beneficial, to protect you against the evils of Satan and your evil inclined self, and to keep you firm on Iman and truth. Beseech Allah continuously in Sujud (The nearest a servant is to his Lord is while doing Sujud, so increase Du`a'). Not only that, but also Allah (may He be Praised) says: (And when My slaves ask you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) concerning Me, then (answer them), I am indeed near (to them by My Knowledge). I respond to the invocations of the supplicant when he calls on Me (without any mediator or intercessor).) and: (Invoke Me, [i.e. believe in My Oneness (Islâmic Monotheism) and ask Me for anything] I will respond to your (invocation).) Since you are commanded to make Du`a' and promised that your Du`a' is accepted, you have to trust your Lord and invoke Him always at all times; at home, on the road, in the Masjid (mosque), while performing Salah etc. Do your best to increase Du`a' at times when Du`a' is most likely to be accepted such as while making Sujud, toward the end of night and during it's middle, before finishing Salah, on Fridays when the Imam is on Minbar (pulpit) until he finishes and during the last hour before sunset, and while waiting for Salah. All the foregoing are times when Du`a' is most likely to be accepted. You have to intend and do your best

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to get the merits of such times and you have to make Du`a' at all other times as well. Ask Allah earnestly and trust in Him at all times. Do not get sick of Du`a'. At the same time, you have to work hard, obey Allah, hasten to all that pleases Him, and beware of all that displeases Him (Glorified and Exalted be He). The foregoing is what all Mukallafs (those meeting the conditions to be held legally accountable for their actions) have to do whether they are Jinn, human beings, men, or women. All of them have to keep firm on obeying Allah, performing His obligations, abandoning His prohibitions, and avoiding all that evokes His Wrath. Allah (Exalted be He) says: (Verily, those who say: "Our Lord is Allâh (Alone)," and then they stand firm) ,i.e. keep firm on following the truth and acting upon it until they die: (Verily, those who say: "Our Lord is Allâh (Alone)," and then they stand firm, on them the angels will descend (at the time of their death) (saying): "Fear not, nor grieve! But receive the glad tidings of Paradise which you have been promised!) ("We have been your friends in the life of

this world and are (so) in the Hereafter. Therein you shall have (all) that your inner-selves desire, and therein you shall have (all) for which you ask.) ("An entertainment from (Allâh), the Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.") Such is the reward of keeping firm on the Truth by word and action. Conversely, Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) dispraises and threatens those who claim goodness by their words but do not show it by their deeds. Allah (Exalted be He) says: (O you who believe! Why do you say that which you do not do?) (Most hateful it is with Allâh that you say that which you do not do.)

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and: (Enjoin you Al-Birr (piety and righteousness and each and every act of obedience to Allâh) on the people and you forget (to practise it) yourselves, while you recite the Scripture [the Taurât (Torah)]! Have you then no sense?) What a great danger this is! All reasonable Mukallafs whether men or women, Jinn or human beings have thus to be truthful in their words and actions and to keep firm on the Truth continuously until death. I ask Allah to guide us all to beneficial knowledge and righteous deeds, to grant us all the comprehensive understanding of His Din, and to keep us firm on acting upon it. I ask Him (Glorified be He) to protect us all from the evils of ourselves, our bad deeds, and the deviating Fitnahs (temptations). May Allah set right the conditions of Muslims all over the world, grant them deep understanding of Din, entrust their affairs to the best of them, and set right their leaders. I ask Allah (Glorified be He) to guide our authorities here in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to every goodness, to support the truth by them, to increase their helpers in promoting goodness, to set right their retinue, and to make them and us all amongst the guiding and guided people. Verily, Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) is All-Hearer, Ever-Near. May peace and blessings be upon Servant and Messenger our Prophet Muhammad, his family, Companions, and all those who follow them in righteousness.

139- Having a good understanding of the Din

and acquiring knowledge of Shari`ah is one of the most important obligations

His Eminence, Shaykh `Abdul-`Aziz Ibn Baz **the General Mufty of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was asked about the importance of the knowledge of Shari`ah (Islamic law) based on the Qur'an and the Sunnah (whatever is reported from the Prophet).** His Eminence answered:

Praise be to Allah and peace and blessings be upon the Messenger of Allah, his Companions, and whoever follows his guidance. To proceed:

It is quite known to all Muslims in general and scholars in particular; that having a profound understanding of the Din (religion of Islam) and acquiring knowledge of Shari`ah is one of the most important obligations imposed to worship Allah. He (Glorified and Exalted be He) has created people to worship Him, sent messengers for the same purpose, and ordered His servants to do that. He (Exalted be He) says: ﴾And I (Allâh) created not the jinn and mankind except that they should worship Me (Alone).﴿ and: ﴾O mankind! Worship your Lord (Allâh)﴿ He (Glorified be He) also says: ﴾And verily, We have sent among every Ummah (community, nation) a Messenger (proclaiming): "Worship Allâh (Alone), and avoid (or keep away from) Tâghût (all false deities i.e. do not worship Tâghût besides Allâh)."﴿

There is no other way to get to learn about worship or observe it except by knowledge. A person can never learn about it but by knowledge extracted from the Qur'an and the Sunnah of Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him). Knowledge is not liable to guessing, personal inference, and fabricated lies; rather, it should be based on the Book of Allah and the Sunnah in light of the Hadith of the Messenger (peace be upon him), and his Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet) (may Allah be pleased with them) communicated to us through scholars. Accordingly, every Muslim, male and female, must learn and have a profound understanding of the Din to be able to know how to worship their Lord. This explains the Messenger's saying (peace be upon him): ﴾If Allah wants to do good to a person, He makes them have a profound understanding of the Din﴿ (Agreed upon by Imams Al-Bukhari and Muslim).

He (peace be upon) said: ﴾Anyone who guides to something good has a reward similar to that of its doer﴿ and: ﴾The best amongst you (Muslims) are those who learn the Qur'an and teach it.﴿

Therefore, it is an obligation on every Mukallaf (person meeting the conditions to be held legally accountable for their actions), men and women, to learn and acquire a profound understanding of the Din through Qur'an, Sunnah, and by asking people of knowledge and insight.

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Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾So ask the people of the Reminder, if you do not know.﴿ So anyone who has the ability and knowledge should refer to the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Messenger (peace be upon him), and whoever does not have this aptitude, should resort to scholars. Furthermore, it is not permissible to bypass ignorance, relinquishment and heedlessness. Rather, a person should learn, comprehend their Din and become enlightened, to be able to know how to observe the obligations upon them such as Salah (Prayer), Sawm (Fast), transactions, and avoid the prohibitions of Allah. There are certain things that are Ma`lum minad-din biddarurah (necessarily known Islamic principles), things which Allah has enjoined on a Muslim such as Salah, Zakah (Obligatory charity), Sawm of Ramadan and Hajj (Pilgrimage). Although they are necessarily known Islamic principles, a person should acquire comprehensive knowledge about their rulings. It is known that Zina (premarital sexual intercourse and/or adultery), intoxicants, burglary, and Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship) - which is one of the most grievous sins - are prohibited. Yet, a person must know all about the means to them and how to guard against them. The same applies to various types of Riba (usury/interest), Ghibah (backbiting) and Namimah (tale-bearing), for a person should have sure knowledge of that,

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since they are ordained to fulfill the Fara'id (obligatory acts) and avoid the prohibitions. Allah says: ﴾Worship Allâh and join none with Him (in worship)﴿ Worship is singling out Allah, obeying His Commands and shunning His Prohibitions.

This complies with His Saying (Exalted be He): ﴾And they were commanded not, but that they should worship Allâh, and worship none but Him Alone (abstaining from ascribing partners to Him), and perform As-Salât (Iqâmat-as-Salât)﴿ which means by obeying His Commands, shunning His Prohibitions and showing Him sincerity. This applies to all affairs of Din. You should abide by all that which Allah has taught and ordained you to do; whether by observance or avoidance according to the nature of the obligation.

This is the duty of all Muslims who are Mukallafs; to follow the Commands of Allah and His Messenger and avoid their Prohibitions. In that way, they shall fulfill worship; the mission for which

they have been created. Hence, a person should learn, be enlightened, acquire a profound understanding of their Din, and beware of imitating the Kafirs (disbelievers/non-Muslims). We implore Allah to grant us health and safety.

140- Duties of knowledge seekers

All praises be to Allah Alone. We praise Him, seek His Assistance, ask Him for forgiveness, we seek refuge with Allah from our evil and bad deeds. Whoever Allah guides, no one would lead him astray. I witness that none has the right to be worshiped but Allah and Muhammad is His Messenger and Servant, peace be upon him, family, Companions and all those who followed him rightly.

﴾O you who believe! Fear Allâh (by doing all that He has ordered and by abstaining from all that He has forbidden) as He should be feared. [Obey Him, be thankful to Him, and remember Him always], and die not except in a state of Islâm [as Muslims (with complete submission to Allâh)].﴿

﴾O mankind! Be dutiful to your Lord, Who created you from a single person (Adam), and from him (Adam) He created his wife [Hawwâ (Eve)], and from them both He created many men and women; and fear Allâh through Whom you demand (your mutual rights), and (do not cut the relations of) the wombs (kinship). Surely, Allâh is Ever an All-Watcher over you.﴿

﴾O you who believe! Keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him, and speak (always) the truth.﴿ ﴾He will direct you to do righteous good deeds and will forgive you your sins. And whosoever obeys Allâh and His Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم), he has indeed achieved a great achievement (i.e. he will be saved from the Hell-fire and will be admitted to Paradise).﴿

To proceed: Dear brothers in the Cause of Allah! Dear honorable sons! I thank Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) as He endowed me to attend this meeting and ask Him (Glorified and Exalted be He) to make it a blessed meeting, benefit us all from it, set right our deeds and hearts and to guide us to the Right Path. Allah's blessings are uncountable and his virtue is endless. Allah is the Only One Who gives all blessings as Allah says (Exalted be He): ﴾And whatever of blessings and good things you have, it is from Allâh.﴿ and: ﴾And if you would count the favours of Allâh, never could you be able to count them.﴿

We thank Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) and ask Him to bestow more of His bounties upon us, you and Muslims all over the world.

Dear brothers and sons in the Cause of Allah, the topic of my talk - as you heard - is: "Duties of knowledge-seekers toward society." This topic is

serious and the duty of the knowledge seeker is also great and it varies according to the degree of knowledge he has, to the need of people for it and according to his ability and capacity.

Knowledge seekers have a duty toward themselves to prepare themselves for education, invite people to Allah, perform duties and pay much attention to knowledge, comprehend religion, review

religious proofs and pay much attention to them. Knowledge seekers should have a large account of religious evidence and know the views of scholars, their points of difference and they should know the preponderant points of difference through evidence from Allah's Book and the Prophet's Sunnah without imitating any one. Any one can imitate but imitation does not imply knowledge. The renowned Imam Abu `Umar ibn `Abdul-Barr, author of Al-Tamhid and other books said: "Scholars agreed that whoever imitates is not a scholar." Knowledge seekers have an important duty that is expected from them to pay much attention to evidence and to do their best to know the evidence of matters and rules from the Holy Book and the Noble Sunnah and from the well-established rules and to have strong evidence, and have thorough knowledge of the scholars' views. Knowing the views of scholars helps them to understand the evidence, deduce rulings and distinguish between the preponderant and the less correct opinion.

On the other hand, knowledge seekers have to be sincere to Allah (May He be glorified), act as if Allah sees them and to make their intention focused on pleasing Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He), to perform their duty, to avoid erring, and to benefit the people without seeking any money or reward in this life as only hypocrites and those like them seek this life. They should not seek to be faltered or to be famous but to benefit Allah's servants and to please Allah (Exalted be He) and be sure of the soundness of every thing they say regarding Fatwas (legal opinions issued by qualified Muslim scholars) or any other matter. They have not to show any slackness in following any of the instructions of Shari`ah (Islamic law) lest others should imitate them.

If they are teachers, students shall imitate them, if they are Muftis, people shall accept their Fatwas and if they are Du`ah (callers to Islam), the matter will be really serious and if they are judges, the matter will be even graver.

Knowledge seekers should do their best to please their Lord and to be sincere to Him, truthful in seeking to please Him and be careful to a large extent to know and examine the legal evidence till they reach the evidence. They should make Fatwa based on sure knowledge, invite to Allah with sure knowledge, teach the people with sure knowledge and enjoin goodness and forbid what is bad

with sure knowledge as Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴿Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه و سلم): "This is my way; I invite unto Allâh (i.e. to the Oneness of Allâh - Islâmic Monotheism) with sure knowledge﴾

Any one who does not have sure knowledge is not considered a scholar, and does not benefit the people in inviting to Allah or others in religious affairs. I mean the real fruitful benefit though this kind of people may benefit the people with some advice or a question that the memorize or by providing a material benefit.

Rather, the real benefit of the knowledge seekers is the result of their truthfulness, sincerity, their abundant knowledge, patience and struggling.

There is an important issue; the duty of the seekers of knowledge is to teach and spread knowledge. Scholars are as the heirs of the messengers. No one ignores the fact that messengers have had a high rank; they were the leaders, they guided the nation and they were the causes of the nation's happiness and safety. Scholars took over the duty after the messengers and assumed their role in inviting to Allah (Exalted be He) and teaching. Muhammad (peace be upon him) was the seal of the prophets so after him remains only conveying and explanation of the Shari`ah, inviting to it, explaining it and spreading it among people. Only scholars whom Allah (Exalted be He) guided assume this role; they invite to Allah and guide leaders through their words, deeds and their

concealed and revealed attitudes.

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Therefore, their duty is really serious and they are exposed to a great danger and they are responsible for the nation as the nation is in very bad need of conveying the message and having it explained by all possible means.

Today, there are many ways including the readable, audible and visual mass media as they have a serious effect on leading the people astray or in guiding them. Also, Friday Khutbah (sermon), feasts, occasions, seminars, festivals for any reasons have serious impact as well as independent bulletins, compiled books and messages.

Thanks to Allah, there are many and easy ways today but the calamity arouses when the will of knowledge seekers weakens, their activity abates, they keep away and do nothing about this great calamity. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴿And who is better in speech than he who [says: "My Lord is Allâh (believes in His Oneness)," and then stands firm (acts upon His Order), and] invites (men) to Allâh's (Islâmic Monotheism), and does righteous deeds, and says: "I am one of the Muslims."﴾

In this life, no one in speech is better than them and ahead of them are the noble messengers and prophets (peace be upon them all), then the scholars.

When they have much knowledge, attain absolute piety and fear Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He), the benefit shall be greater and conveying the message about Allah (Exalted be He) and His Messenger (peace be upon him) shall become more complete. In the contrary, when piety is reduced, knowledge becomes scant

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and the fear of Allah is reduced or one is preoccupied with the concerns and cares and desires of this life. Thus, this knowledge and good will thereby be reduced. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴿Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه و سلم): "This is my way; I invite unto Allâh (i.e. to the Oneness of Allâh - Islâmic Monotheism) with sure knowledge, I and whosoever follows me (also must invite others to Allâh i.e. to the Oneness of Allâh - Islâmic Monotheism with sure knowledge).﴾

Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) explains that the mission of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is to invite to Allah (Exalted be He) on sure knowledge and He commands the Prophet (peace be upon him) to convey that to the people. Allah (Exalted be He) commands the Prophet (peace be upon him) to say to the people "This is my way...", meaning that this is the way I am on; the Shari`ah (Islamic law) and this my way of speaking and working, my approach and way to Allah.

So scholars have to follow the way of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) which is to call people to the way of Allah with sure knowledge. This is the way of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and all his followers.

A person shall not be considered a true follower of the Prophet (peace be upon him) unless he follows this way. Whoever invites to Allah (Exalted be He) with sure knowledge, disdains atheism, and keeps on the right path, will be considered a true follower of the Prophet (peace be upon him). So Allah (Exalted be He) says at the end of the same Ayah (Qur'anic verse): ﴿And Glorified and Exalted be Allâh (above all that they associate as partners with Him). And I am not of the Mushrikûn (polytheists, pagans, idolaters and disbelievers in the Oneness of Allâh; those who worship others along with Allâh or set up rivals or partners to Allâh)."﴾

The truthful Da`y (caller to Islam) is the one who follows the Prophet (peace be upon him) with sure knowledge and is not a liar or a person who speaks about Allah (Exalted be He) in ignorance

what is not apt for Him. On the contrary, a truthful Da`y describes Allah (Exalted be He) with Perfect Attributes, shows that Allah is unlike any of His creatures, believes in the Oneness of Allah, is sincere to Him and disowns Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship) and Mushriks (those who associates others with Allah in His Divinity or worship).

A Da`y has to announce the Oneness of Allah, keep to His Shari`ah (Islamic law), describe Allah (Exalted be He) as being unlike His creatures and with what He describes Himself and with what His Prophet (peace be upon him) described Him in a way that suits His Majesty and Might and does not imply any Tamthil (likening Allah's Attributes to those of His Creation) or Ta`til (denial of Allah's Attributes).

Thus, a Da`y is to believe completely in Allah's Attributes and Names without any Tamthil or Tashbih (comparison). At the same time they are to avoid Ta`til.

They should describe Allah (Exalted be He) with His Divine Names and Him with His Fine Attributes mentioned in the Holy Book and the authentic Sunnah without Tahrif (distortion of the meaning), Ta`til, Takyif (questioning Allah's Attributes), Tamthil, increase or decrease. They are followers not innovators and they follow the Right Path that the messengers and their followers followed before and then the followers in righteousness and at the head of them is Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), his household and Companions (may Allah be pleased with them) and their followers in righteousness

headed by the famous Imams after the companions as Imam Malik ibn Anas, Imam Muhammad ibn Idris Al-Shafi`y, Imam Abu Hanifah Al-Nu`man ibn Thabit, Imam Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Hanbal, Imam Al-Awza`y, Imam Sufyan Al-Thawry, Imam Ishaq ibn Rahawayh, and other Imams of knowledge and guidance that followed the right path in confirming the Names and Attributes of Allah and describing Him as being unlike His creatures.

Also, knowledge seekers are to be extremely careful not to conceal any thing from what he learnt. He should be careful to reach the Right, reply to the enemies of Islam, do not go easy with matters and not to be secluded in the arena as much as he can. If Islam's enemies appear to liken or deny the Attributes, they should appear to reply about that in writing and by speaking and by any other suitable means. They have not to say these misconceptions can be handled by somebody else "not me", but they should handle them by themselves. If there were other Imams, they would not leave the issue. They should be distinguished and not secluded. They should appear at the appropriate time to make what is right and victorious and to reply to the enemies of Islam in writing or in other forms through radio, newspapers, television or through any other possible way. They should not conceal the knowledge they have but should write, address the people in Khutbahs, talk and reply to innovators in religion and to other

enemies of Islam with what Allah (Exalted be He) provided them with might according to their knowledge and the facilities Allah provided to them. Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾Verily, those who conceal the clear proofs, evidence and the guidance, which We have sent down, after We have made it clear for the people in the Book, they are the ones cursed by Allâh and cursed by the cursers.﴿ ﴾Except those who repent and do righteous deeds, and openly declare (the truth which they concealed). These, I will accept their repentance. And I am the One Who accepts repentance, the

Most Merciful.)

We have to contemplate these two great verses. Allah warns us against concealing knowledge, threatens and curses whoever does this. Then Allah shows that one can evade this threat and curse through repentance, reform, openly declaring (the truth which they concealed) and repentance for past negligence, sins, reforming the conditions that they could not reform by themselves and declaring the knowledge they might have said but they have concealed or did so for a temporary gain or false interpretation. If Allah guides them, their repentance would be only considered through this declaration and only through this repentance would they be safe. It also implies repenting from any past negligence and sins, giving up the sin while fearing Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) and fearing His Punishment.

There is a third condition: truthful intention not to repeat that again. Rather, they should declare their repentance

so that people follow their example. There is another matter that is related to scholars before Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He), then before his brothers, colleagues and society; they have to fear Allah (Exalted be He) in themselves. As soon as they know any thing, they should hurry to apply it. They should know and apply and not linger in that. They should always reckon themselves, do their best to apply Allah's Verdicts on themselves both the obligatory and the non-obligatory till they represent knowledge in their ethics, deeds, biography, in his knowledge seminars, Khutbahs, travels, stay, in land, in sea, in the plane or in any place as this is a matter that concerns them. They should be careful to provide their brothers, colleagues and students with their knowledge and deeds. Hence, our Prophet's (peace be upon him) Da`wah was complete in theory and application. His biography is the best of biographies, his words are the best next to Allah's (Glorified and Exalted be He) and his manners are the best manners. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: (And Verily, you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) are on an exalted (standard of) character.) His manners were application of the Qur'an as `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said that the Prophet (peace be upon him) applied the Qur'anic commands and forbade what it forbade, applied its ethics, considered its great examples and stories and called the people to that.

Scholars have to take Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) as a good example in this great manner, be truthful to Allah (Exalted be He) in their sayings and deeds, to convey Allah's command and what He forbids, to enjoin good and forbid evil as much as possible, to do their best to advise those in charge by guiding them and their neighbors and all the society and all people by every means as much as they can. They should not neglect any of these teachings, especially nowadays as there is a lack of scholars, evil is widespread, and there is mischief in the entire world; in both Muslim and non-Muslim countries. Every one, who has sure knowledge, knows about the great evils broadcast in the radio stations, newspapers, televisions, news bulletins and books to lead people to Hellfire.

The armies are led by the enemies of Islam who use a variety of dangerous means and spread them amongst Muslims and non-Muslims to destroy them and lead them to the Hellfire and to make them share their bad ethics and hateful biography and to accompany them in Hellfire, as

their leader so desires. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: (Surely, Shaitân (Satan) is an

enemy to you, so take (treat) him as an enemy. He only invites his Hizb (followers) that they may become the dwellers of the blazing Fire.》

So knowledge seekers should not be secluded and take care only of themselves. They have duties toward themselves and duties toward others in conveying, declaring and inviting to Allah. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: 《Invite (mankind, O Muhammad صلى الله عليه و سلم) to the Way of your Lord (i.e. Islâm) with wisdom (i.e. with the Divine Revelation and the Qur'ân) and fair preaching, and argue with them in a way that is better.》 and: 《but invite them to your Lord》 Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) commands the Prophet (peace be upon him), to invite the people to Him and this command is for us all not only for prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) only. When the Prophet (peace be upon him) is commanded, the command is for him, all of us and all the scholars except when it is proven by evidence that the command is for the Prophet (peace be upon him) alone.

O Servant of Allah do not be lazy or secluded. You have to convey the Commands of Allah (Exalted be He) to the Servants of Allah. You have also to advise whoever you can in every place; the village chief, the village scholar, the village guide and whoever is in charge of the village and in towns, and in any place where you communicate with the people in a good way, advise them, direct them to good,

cooperate with them in goodness and piety, good manners, in sermons and in good words gently and not with violence.

In the same way, you should cooperate with the Great Imam of the country (i.e. the ruler) and with ministers and judges in carrying out their duties. You should also cooperate with Du`ah and your brothers in the Cause of Allah.

This is the way, scholars must be as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: 《Religion is based on advising one another. Upon this we said: For whom? He replied: For Allah, His Book, His Messenger and for the leaders and the general Muslims.》 (Related by Muslim in his Sahih (authentic) Book of Hadith).

Moreover, it is related in the Two Sahih (authentic) Books of Hadith (i.e. Al-Bukhari and Muslim) on the authority of Jarir ibn `Abdullah Al-Bajaly (may Allah be pleased with him) who said: 《I gave the pledge of allegiance to Allah's prophet (peace be upon him) on the observance of Prayer, payment of Zakah, and sincerity and well-wishing for every Muslim.》

In addition, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: 《May Allah brighten (the face of) a person who hears my words, comprehends them, and then conveys them as he has heard them; for perhaps the one informed comprehends more than the one who heard.》 In another

wording: 《... many a bearer of knowledge is not versed in it.》 Yet in another wording: 《... many a bearer of knowledge conveys it to one who is more knowledgeable than they are.》

Moreover, in one of his Khutbahs the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: 《Those who are present should convey it (this information) to those who are absent, as the informed one might comprehend it (what I have said) better than the present audience who will convey it to them.》 People will remain enjoying goodness as much as they cooperate in righteousness and piety with their kings, princess, judges, Du`ah and with all Muslims provided that they consider good ways, gentility and wisdom. It is related in a Sahih Hadith that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: 《Whoever is

deprived of forbearance and gentleness is, in fact, deprived of all goodness.》 (Related by Muslim in his Sahih Book of Hadith) on the authority of Jarir ibn `Abdullah and `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her).

In a Hadith Marfu` (a Hadith narrated from the Prophet with a connected or disconnected chain of narration) that is narrated by `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her), the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: 《Allah is kind and He loves kindness and confers for kindness what He does not confer for severity and does not confer upon anything else besides it (kindness).》

The Prophet (peace be upon him) also said in a Sahih Hadith: 《Kindness is not to be found in anything but that it adds to its beauty and it is not withdrawn from anything but it makes it defective.》 Yet it is sufficient in this regard to mention that Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: 《Invite (mankind, O Muhammad صلى الله عليه و سلم) to the Way of your Lord (i.e. Islâm) with wisdom (i.e. with the Divine Revelation and the Qur'ân) and fair preaching, and argue with them in a way that is better.》 and: 《And by the Mercy of Allâh, you dealt with them gently. And had you been severe and harsh-hearted, they would have broken away from about you》

It is worth mentioning that when Allah (Exalted be He) sent Musa and Harun (Moses and Aaron, peace be upon them both) to Pharaoh, He (Glorified and Exalted be He) said to them: 《"And speak to him mildly, perhaps he may accept admonition or fear (Allâh)."》

I ask Allah with His Beautiful Names and Supreme Attributes (Glorified and Exalted be He) to guide you, all Muslims and me to what pleases Him. May He guide us all to

His Right Path and provide us all with useful knowledge to work with it and to follow legal ethics and the great manners which Allah praised his prophet (peace be upon him). We have to mention the Prophet's Hadith: 《Whoever travels on a road in search of knowledge, Allah will cause them to travel on one of the roads of Paradise.》

So, knowledge seeking and comprehending religion is great. We have also to mention the Prophet's Hadith: 《If Allah wants to do good to a person, He makes them comprehend the religion.》 (Related by Al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Mu`awiyah, may Allah be pleased with him). This great Hadith signifies that comprehending religion is a clear proof indicating that Allah (Exalted be He) wants to do good for a Servant and the one who does not comprehend religion is forsaken and Allah (Exalted be He) does not want to do him good. There is neither might nor power except with Allah! We ask Allah (Glorified be He) to guide us all to what it pleases Him, make us die as Muslims, set right all Muslims' conditions, appoint their rulers from amongst their best, make their leaders good, increase the number of Du`ah, and grant them all comprehension of religion acting according to the Sunnah of our Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Allah knows best. May peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family, and Companions!

Questions

The first question: It is common among the students, especially in colleges and scientific institutions, to say: 'Knowledge has passed away with their bearers,' and 'Those who seek knowledge in the educational institutions only mean to have certificates and worldly gains'. How should we answer this? What is the ruling when a person combines the intention of seeking worldly matters and certificates with the intention of seeking knowledge to benefit himself and his community?

The answer is: These phrases are not correct. Such speech and the like should not be said. Whoever claims that all people become worse, he is the worst of them.

However, we should encourage people to seek knowledge patiently and with perseverance and free themselves from duties to have it. We should think well of the knowledge seekers except those who are known for their corrupted thoughts.

It is related that when Mu`adh was about to die, he advised those who were around him to seek knowledge saying: "Knowledge and faith are preserved and whoever seeks them, he will find them," i.e. in their place in the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His trustworthy Prophet (peace be upon him). However, a scholar would die and take knowledge with him, because knowledge is done away with by the death of scholars but still there is a group of people on the Truth and they are victorious. Therefore, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: (Allah does not take away the knowledge by taking

it away from (the hearts of) the people, but takes it away by the death of

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the religious learned men until there is no religious learned man remaining, then people will take as their leaders ignorant persons who when consulted will give their verdict without knowledge. So they will go astray and will lead people astray.) (Related by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih book of Hadith).

It is this point that should be feared when the ignorant person occupies the positions of Fatwa (legal opinion issued by qualified Muslim scholar) and education. So, they go astray and lead people astray. Claiming that 'knowledge has passed away ...' may frustrate people. However, the resolute and the insightful will not be frustrated in the least because of this speech but it pushes him forward to seek knowledge to fill in the gap.

The one who is understanding and faithful, and the truthful is never affected with it but makes progress, exerts efforts, perseveres, learns, and hastens to learn because he needs it to fill in the gap which those who claim that knowledge has decreased and most scholars have passed gone. Praise be to Allah, there is still a victorious group on the Truth as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: (A group of people from my Ummah will remain victorious (and on the right path) and those who desert or oppose them shall not be able to do them any harm until Allah's Command is executed (i. e. Resurrection is established).) So we have to exert efforts in pursuit of

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knowledge, encourage people to it, fill the gap, do our duty in our country depending on the desired Shar`y (Islamically lawful) proofs, and eagerness to serve and educate Muslims. We should encourage them to sincerity and truthfulness in seeking knowledge. Whoever wants to have a certificate to help him convey knowledge and call to goodness has done well. If a person wants money to help him, there is no harm to study to have a certificate that helps him spread knowledge. The people should accept his knowledge and he can take the money that helps him to do this. However, for the help of Allah (Exalted be He) and then money, many people would not have learned nor called to Islam.

Therefore, money helps Muslims to seek knowledge, meet their needs, and convey the mission to the people. When `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) assumed a position, the Prophet (peace be upon him) gave him property. `Umar said: "Give it to someone who is poorer than me." Thereupon, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ("Take out of this wealth and make use of it or give it in charity. Money which comes to you without avarice and without asking for it, take it but in other circumstances do not let your heart become inclined to it.") (Related by Muslim in his Sahih).

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The Prophet (peace be upon him) gave to Al-Mu'allafati Qulubuhum (those whose hearts are inclined to Islam). He exhorted them to accept the religion of Allah, so they embraced Islam in groups. If it were Haram (prohibited), he would not have given anything to them but he gave to them before and after the Liberation of Makkah.

On the Day of Opening Makkah, he gave some people one hundred camels and he used to give without fearing poverty in order to incite the desire of people to Islam and Da`wah (calling to Islam).

Verily, Allah (Exalted be He) proportioned for Al-Mu'allafati Qulubuhum a share of Zakah and assigned for them a share in Bayt-ul-Mal (Muslim treasury). Similarly, teachers, judges, and other Muslims have their shares. May Allah grant us success!

Second question: Many scholars evade assuming religious posts. What is the reason for that? Could you please advise us in this regard? It is also noted that many students in Shari`ah (Islamic law) faculties evade positions related to the judicial system. Please advise.

Answer: Religious posts in the judicial system, education, giving Fatwas, and Khutbahs (sermons) are honorable and important and the Muslims are in dire need of these things. If scholars abandon these roles, the positions will be assumed by ignorant people and so they shall go astray and lead others astray. So, if any scholar is needed to assume any of these posts; whether judicial, educational, or related to giving Khutbahs or Da`wah (calling to Allah) or the like, it will be Wajib (obligatory) on him to take charge of it. That is because these posts are considered collective obligations and if they are assigned to

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specific qualified persons, it becomes Wajib on them to assume them and they are not allowed to evade the responsibility. However, if it seems that some scholars are fulfilling the need of Muslims regarding any of the foregoing posts, it will not be Wajib on other scholars to assume the same. Rather, they should do something that is more beneficial to Muslims as was done by Prophet Yusuf (Joseph, peace be upon him) when he said to the king of Egypt: ﴾Set me over the store-houses of the land; I will indeed guard them with full knowledge" (as a minister of finance in Egypt).﴿ Prophet Yusuf (peace be upon him) asked to be given this post, as he knew that he would benefit the people. He was a prophet and a messenger and it is known that the prophets are the best people, who seek for the good. So he did good for the people of Egypt and called them to the truth.

In case when seekers of knowledge see they will benefit the people, they may ask for posts and accept them whether they are judicial, educational or ministerial posts or others. Any way, their intention should not be to attain pleasures of this world but to reform, do good, receive the reward from Allah in the hereafter, and avail people with regard to their religious and worldly affairs. At the same time, scholars should not let the concerned posts be assumed by ignorant and disobedient people. When scholars are asked to assume posts that they think they are qualified for, they should not hesitate but they have to take charge of the post, make their intention good, do their best and do not say that they fear so and so.

It is worth mentioning that good intention and sincere work leads to success and prosperity, when Allah reforms intentions and a servant does his best to have goodness.

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In this regard, it is narrated that `Uthman ibn Abu Al-`As Al-Thaqafy said: "O Messenger of Allah, make me the leader of Salah (Prayer) among my tribe." The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾You are their leader but you should follow the weakest of them and have a Mu'adhin (caller to Prayer) who does not charge for this duty.﴿ (Related by Al-Imam Ahmad and Ahl-ul-Sunan (authors) of Hadith compilations classified by jurisprudential themes' with a Sahih (authentic) chain of narrators).

So, `Uthman (may Allah be pleased with him) asked to be the leader of his people to attain legal

benefit for them, educate them, enjoin Ma`ruf (that which is judged as good, beneficial, or fitting by Islamic law and Muslims of sound intellect), and forbid Munkar (that which is unacceptable or disapproved of by Islamic law and Muslims of sound intellect), as Yusuf (peace be upon him) did.

Scholars said it is forbidden to ask for leadership, if there is no necessity, as it is a dangerous matter. In the Hadith, it is prohibited to do so. However, if there is a need and a legal benefit, it is allowed to ask for it, as in the story of prophet Yusuf and the Hadith of `Uthman (may Allah be pleased with him), which is mentioned above.

The third question: One of the major problems which seekers of knowledge encounter is the negligence of the society towards them and their knowledge,

for they do not feel esteemed in society, since this materialistic society at the present time tends to evaluate people only by means of their wealth and financial profit realized from specific jobs. In your Eminence's viewpoint, what is the remedy for this?

How can seekers of knowledge live in an adequate society, where they can live and acquire knowledge? What should they do? Please provide us with advice on the basis of the experience that you gained from your Shaykhs and their Shaykhs successively.

Answer: What the questioner says is untrue; the truth is that knowledge always promotes its holders and gives them preference over others in all societies. So, if any knowledge seeker goes to America, England, France or any other place, their knowledge will promote them among the Islamic communities there, and among whomever they call to Allah with sure knowledge amongst Mushrikin (Those who associate others in worship with Allah), for when they get to know Al-Haqq (the Truth) by means of clear evidence and good morals of its holders, they will submit to it.

Islam is the religion of Fitrah (natural disposition), justice, morals, strength, activeness, and consolation; it is the religion of all virtues. Accordingly, seekers of knowledge who move along with sure knowledge, know the shar`y (Islamically lawful) evidence, perceive the rules of Islam and act in accordance with them, will be esteemed and admired everywhere, especially among their own people and community when

they experience their knowledge, sincerity, truthfulness, patience, as they should be wise healers (to the hearts), who call to Allah with wisdom and lenience. Therein, they should be proud of themselves, and will be respected wherever they are, as long as they are embracing knowledge with words and deeds, avoiding the morals of the Fasiqs (those who flagrantly violate Islamic law) and criminals,

for they and their likes are beloved by Allah and His Righteous Servants, as long as they know and act (in accordance with what they know), advise their fellows and are tender to them, as well as being keen to benefit them with their knowledge, morals, money and power like the prophets and righteous people.

However, saying that seekers of knowledge have no position in the society, and are disregarded is a false notion that is inconsistent with the reality as previously clarified.

Seekers of knowledge who have sure knowledge of the Din (religion of Islam) are sincere to Allah and His Servants and should be proud of themselves, and admired wherever they are, so long as they are sincere to Allah, attain knowledge and observe Da`wah (call to Islam), as well as doing good to people by being gentle and amiable, so they are to be promised the good end and shall be praised by the society and above this, they are to be promised the great reward of Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He), as He (Exalted be He) says: ﴿Verily, he who fears Allâh with obedience to Him (by abstaining from sins and evil deeds, and by performing righteous good deeds), and is patient, then surely, Allâh makes not the reward of the Muhsinûn (good-doers - see V.2:112) to be lost."﴾

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He (Glorified be He) says: ﴿As for those who strive hard in Us (Our Cause), We will surely guide them to Our Paths (i.e. Allâh's religion - Islâmic Monotheism). And verily, Allâh is with the Muhsinûn (good doers)."﴾ Addressing His Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), He (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴿So be patient. Surely, the (good) end is for Al-Muttaqûn (the pious)﴾ There are many Ayahs to this effect.

On the other hand, if Allah has destined for some of the Du`ah (callers to Islam) not to achieve their objectives; rather to be hurt and tested, should they not take an example from the messengers who had been hurt, tested, humiliated and even killed?! On the contrary, seekers of knowledge should pattern after them (peace be upon them); they should have an example in their endurance and patience.

Moreover, assuming that any seeker of knowledge has not found respect among people, this surely does not harm them, since this is not the reason for which they have sought knowledge, as they have done that to save themselves from ignorance and bring people out of darkness into light. So if people accept that from seekers of knowledge and promote them for that, praise be to Allah, but if not, they (seekers of knowledge) will still be attaining good. Over and above, if they are killed or assaulted, they will have patterned after the messengers (peace be upon them), and after the last of them Muhammad (peace be upon him), who was hurt and exiled from his city Makkah to Madinah.

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Hence, the sincere truthful Du`ah are to be heralded with glad tidings of welfare, esteem, and dignity as well as a good end, if they follow the right path, have good morals, observe guidance and good conduct away from violence or sternness, without interfering with what is not of their concern. Thus, they will experience great welfare, like prophets and messengers (peace be upon them), and like the last and the best of them; the Imam (leader) of Du`ah and Mujahidin (those who strive in the cause

of Allah) our Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), and those who follow them in righteousness. May Allah grant us success!

The fourth question: In this era, there is a gap between the Muslim scholars, seekers of knowledge and the laypeople, which causes a problem. What are, you think, the solutions of this problem?

Answer: The gap results from the corruption of the seekers of knowledge or scholars. If the seeker of knowledge does not offer Salah (Prayer) properly, commits sins in public, or is too harsh to people, they will be hated by scholars and righteous people. The same applies to a scholar who is Fasiq (someone flagrantly violating Islamic law) or one who backbites people; they will be hated by the righteous seekers of knowledge who exert much effort in calling people to goodness seeking reward from Allah (Exalted be He). However, there is no such gap between the righteous scholars.

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The gap is only between the corrupt people who claim to be knowledgeable, while they befriend Fasiqs, smokers, drunkards or neglectful of Salah and their likes.

Who would like such people or accept their advice? Rather, they need guidance, advice, care and patience until they follow the straight path.

They are the ones who cause the gap; they perverted the sayings and deeds of scholars. A scholar who does not represent their knowledge well through Taqwa (fearing Allah as He should be feared) and good reputation, but is counted among superstitious people, grave worshippers and drunkards, is not a scholar and does not deserve appreciation. They deserve to be neglected by righteous scholars and seekers of knowledge until they return to Al-Haqq (the Truth) and follow the straight path.

Undoubtedly, seekers of knowledge hate such people because of their notoriety; they might be even pleased with the gap between them, as they are useless to them and harmful to the society. They need to be advised and invited to the way of Allah (Exalted be He), so that they make use of their knowledge and benefit the people.

Everyone should sincerely cooperate in righteousness and Taqwa, hold fast to Allah's Orders, and adopt persistently what solves

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grudges and bridges the gap between them through useful knowledge, righteous deeds, good reputation and patience. May Allah grant us success!

Fifth Question: What is the meaning of your saying - may Allah protect you -: It is an obligation upon the seeker of knowledge to exercise Ijtihad (personal discretion)? Is everyone qualified to do that? What should be our stand towards the four doctrines of the four Imams, which have become widespread in our countries and among the people and are being imitated by many people at all times and places?

Answer : It is obligatory upon the seeker of knowledge to exercise Ijtihad according to his own capacity. This means that the beginner should exert effort to continue seeking knowledge and pay great care and full attention to become qualified to give preference to one view over another in controversial issues. On the other hand, it is the duty of the qualified seeker of knowledge whom Allah has provided with religious knowledge, the one who finished his higher education, read books and got acquainted with the scholars' views, to exert effort to give priority to the preponderant opinion and to falsify the invalid one by means of religious evidence, patience and continuous reading.

It is important to note that seeking knowledge is not easy; it needs patience, perseverance and the review of Hadiths in relation to the subject of study and research. One might spend many days researching and studying without finding the Hadith he is looking for and without forming an opinion regarding its authenticity or weakness.

By the same token, reviewing the opinions of scholars and giving preference to the preponderant one

requires patience and considering the evidence. Thus, Ijtihad means exerting effort in seeking knowledge

to become professional therein in order to be one of the people of knowledge, who are aware of the legislative rulings and the stands of scholars concerning disputable issues. Thus, one should adopt the situation of a sincere advisor who loves all the preceding scholars, is pleased with them, and recognizes their positions and the effort they exerted in seeking knowledge and spreading it among people. Moreover, one should benefit from their speeches and knowledge, and as such, should avoid insulting them, hating them, or criticizing them in a way that underestimates their efforts or deprives him of benefiting from them.

The seeker of knowledge recognizes the position of those before him, the information and knowledge they compiled and collected and their sincerity to Allah (Exalted be He) and His servants, and thus, they benefit from their speeches. This does not mean that one should imitate those before him in truth and falsehood, but he should recognize the truth through evidence. It is reported from Malik (may Allah be merciful with him) that he said: Any of us may be right or wrong except the one lying in this grave; i.e. the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him).

It is also reported from Al-Shafi'y (may Allah bestow His mercy upon him) that he said: Scholars unanimously agreed that whenever the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) becomes clear to someone, he should not abandon it for the sake of someone's view.

He (may Allah be merciful with him) also said: If I say anything in discordance with the saying of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him), then do not care about what I say. The same concept was also adopted by Ahmad and Abu Hanifah as had been implemented by Malik and Ash-Shafi'iy. May Allah bestow His mercy upon all of them.

Other Imams followed the same attitude and advised people and encouraged them to follow the religious evidence from the Book of Allah, the Sunnah of His Prophet (peace be upon him) and the unanimous agreement of the righteous predecessors of this Ummah and not to give preference to anyone's view over the saying of Allah (Exalted be He) and His Messenger (peace be upon him); rather, the saying of Allah (Exalted be He), the saying of His Messenger (peace be upon him) and the unanimous agreement of the righteous predecessors of the Ummah should be given preference over any other saying.

This is the stance of well-versed scholars and this should be the attitude of the seeker of knowledge towards them, so that he will grow up following their manners in preferring the saying of Allah (Exalted be He), the saying of His Messenger (peace be upon him), giving priority to preponderant views and supporting them with evidence, respecting the scholars, recognizing their positions, being pleased with them and asking Allah (Exalted be He) to bestow His mercy upon them.

The evil scholars from Al-Jahmiyyah (a deviated Muslim Sect), the Mu'tazilites and their alike, should be hated and disliked for the sake of Allah and people should be warned against their evil, their hideous acts and their falsified beliefs. This should be done out of sincerity to Allah (Exalted be He) and His servants and fulfilling the obligation of enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong. May Allah grant us success!

The sixth question: What is Your Eminence's view about what many seekers of knowledge reiterate that "Anyone who takes his books as his Shaykh will go astray"?

Answer: It is well known that anyone who seeks knowledge from books rather than from professional scholars is more likely to fall into mistakes.

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This is true, for anyone who does not study at the hands of scholars and does not follow the ways they followed when seeking knowledge will fall into many errors and will not be able to distinguish between Al-Haqq (the Truth) and falsehood, due to lacking in knowledge of the proofs of Shari`ah (Islamic law) and the conditions the scholars take into consideration and act upon. However, to say that they are more likely to fall in mistakes, this is a matter of debate. Anyway, their mistakes will be numerous, for not seeking knowledge from scholars and for not benefiting from them or knowing the principles they adopted, so they can not distinguish between what is right and wrong in the manuscripts and printed books.

Some mistakes may be found in books, and some book readers, lacking in discretion, may take it for granted and so deem as lawful what Allah prohibited or deem as unlawful what Allah permitted, due to their lack of knowledge. For example, a book may mistakenly state that so and so is not permissible, though this is actually permissible or vice versa as a result of a misprint.

A book may read that so and so is permissible, although it is actually not. Thus, the reader who lacks knowledge and discretion may not discover such mistakes.

141- In pursuit of knowledge

All praise be to Allah Alone. May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon the Last Prophet!

Undoubtedly, knowledge is the basic foundation of human life, and the knowledge of Shari`ah (Islamic law) is most worthy of care and attention. Knowledge of the Islamic Shari`ah helps the individual to grasp the wisdom for which Allah (may He be Praised) created us and sent His messengers. It is the knowledge through which the individual knows Allah (Exalted be He) and how to worship Him. Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴿And I (Allâh) created not the jinn and mankind except that they should worship Me (Alone).﴾ He (Exalted be He) also says: ﴿And verily, We have sent among every Ummah (community, nation) a Messenger (proclaiming): "Worship Allâh (Alone), and avoid (or keep away from) Tâghût (all false deities i.e. do not worship Tâghût besides Allâh)."﴾ These two Ayahs (Qur'anic verse) reveal the wisdom behind the creation of man and Jinn and sending the messengers. Any nation that does not adopt a sound creed or follows a true religion is certainly ignorant. This is so regardless of the level of development and progress they may achieve in different walks of life. Allah (may He be Praised) says: ﴿Or do you think that most of them hear or understand? They are only like cattle — nay, they are even farther astray from the Path. (i.e. even worse than cattle).﴾

The good life is that of the people of knowledge and faith. Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴿O you who believe! Answer Allâh (by obeying Him) and (His) Messenger when he (صلى الله عليه وسلم) calls you to that which will give you life﴾ He (may He be Praised) says: ﴿Whoever works righteousness - whether male or female - while he (or she) is a true believer (of Islâmic Monotheism) verily, to him We will give a good life (in this world with respect, contentment and lawful provision), and We shall pay them certainly a reward in proportion to the best of what they used to do (i.e. Paradise in the Hereafter).﴾ Beneficial knowledge is only acquired through a teacher, who must be well aware of the subject they teach, since the one who does not have something cannot give it. Scholars are the inheritors of the prophets. Therefore, teaching has proved to be the most difficult task due to the perfect qualities a teacher should have in terms of beneficial knowledge, good morals, continuous righteous deeds, patience and the ability to bear difficulties for the sake of correcting students and giving them a pure Islamic upbringing. The more qualities of perfection a teacher has, the more successful they will be in teaching.

In this regard, the ideal example and the leader of all is Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) ibn `Abdullah Al-Hashimy, Al-Araby, Al-Makky, then, Al-Madany. He was the most perfect in all good qualities. He encountered

many difficulties and suffered great hardship in teaching and instructing people. However, he patiently endured all difficulties for the sake of conveying his message to bring the Ummah (nation based on one creed) out of darkness into light. May Allah give him the best reward!

The Prophet (peace be upon him) raised a righteous generation that is considered the best generation in human history. The reason lies in the outstanding upbringing and instruction the Prophet (peace be upon him) gave to his Companions, his tireless patience, and helping them come to Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He), Who guided them first of all.

Therefore, the major task any teacher must have is to follow the footsteps of the first teacher i.e. Muhammad (peace be upon him) and try their best to know how to carry out this task, then, apply it to their students as much as they can. The Ummah desperately needs righteous teachers whose knowledge and approach are based on the Qur'an and Sunnah (whatever is reported from the Prophet), particularly at a time in which advocates of destruction prevail and callers of reconstruction and reform are rare. Moreover, teachers should disseminate the morals of the Salaf (righteous predecessors), such as truthfulness, honesty, sincerity, respecting commands and prohibitions, competition in virtues, and avoiding vice.

Therefore, teaching is one of the most difficult careers; yet, it is the most decent, fruitful and magnificent as long as teachers are sincere, have good intentions and work hard.

By doing so, he will receive a reward that is similar to that of those who benefited from his knowledge. In an honorable Hadith, the Prophet (peace be upon him) directs: ﴾The best among you (Muslims) are those who learn the Qur'an and teach it.﴿ He (peace be upon) said: ﴾"If Allah guides aright even one man through you that is better for you than to possess the most valuable of the camels."﴿ The Prophet (peace be upon him) also said: ﴾Anyone who guides to something good will have a reward similar to that of its doer.﴿ Certainly, teachers act as spiritual mentors to the student. Thus, they should have high morals and good standing so that their students may imitate them. Also, teachers should observe the commands of the Shari`ah and keep away from prohibitions. They should manage their time; joke a little; be patient, smile, be happy, open-hearted, handsome, self-sufficient, competent, knowledgeable; and master a great deal of the Arabic styles that enable them to do their job perfectly. Undoubtedly, anyone concerned with all aspects of study of the human soul and looks for the means that help one know the way through which they can easily implant the sciences in that soul will reap good results in unveiling its secrets, inherent emotions, and feelings and capacity to receive information.

This study and research will provide the teacher with information that is essentially the basic rule on which education depends. These rules may be summarized as follows: When a teacher wants to implant a piece of information

in the mind of their students, they should first know everything about the lesson they should educate, and how to teach and introduce it, and draw the attention of the students to the main subject. They should do this by focusing on the topic of the lesson without discussing irrelevant points that may distract the students or deprive them of its benefit. In teaching the sciences, they should utilize the powers of persuasion through using good presentation and similes, and concentrate on the key points that represent the main components of each lesson. A teacher should inculcate the general points first and then move gradually to the details, since the general points constitute the most important part of everything and the details come next in importance. A teacher should prepare intensive materials and explain them to the students, make them like the lesson that is being taught, encourage them to listen to it and acquaint them with the benefits and objectives. They should take

into account that they are teaching each student in an appropriate manner and in a language each of them can understand,

since students are not equal. A teacher should allocate time for discussion and tolerate any mistakes because these mistakes are made in the quest for truth. They should encourage students to conduct research that leads to the truth, taking into consideration factors of the environment, human nature, habits and climate. These matters greatly affect the psychology of the students

and reflect their understanding, records of achievement and endeavors. Unquestionably, an intelligent teacher, who takes these matters into consideration greatly, influences their respective students more than their colleagues. A teacher is like a doctor, so it is their duty to know the tendencies of the students and the level of intelligence of each one. In the light of this knowledge, they should evaluate the basic criteria for addressing the minds and understanding the students. This is one of the main reasons behind the success of the teacher.

In fact, the most important knowledge that must be taught is that which deals with correcting one's `Aqidah (creed) in the light of the Qur'an and Sunnah and the guidance of the Salaf. After that, they should care about the rest of the Shari`ah sciences and the other sciences that are indispensible for humanity on condition that they do not divert one from the fundamental knowledge for which Allah (Exalted be He) created all things. Another condition is that these sciences should serve the public interest without prejudice to the beneficial knowledge. Allah (Exalted be He) guides some people to acquire and teach beneficial knowledge for great wisdom that He knows, so He benefited humanity everywhere through those people who, subsequently, gained a good reputation and fame, a doubled reward, and a happy ending. Other people are deprived of all these things because they swerved from the straight path, so that their knowledge brought them and their students evil consequences. Not only are they lost in the maze of disbelief, atheism and heresy, but they also misled other people and shared the same sin. The utmost justice and wisdom of Allah (Exalted be He) and His punishment decree that

anyone who deviates from the truth and the straight path or follows their whims will have only loss and deviation. Allah (may He be Praised) says: ﴾So when they turned away (from the Path of Allâh), Allâh turned their hearts away (from the Right Path).﴿ He (Exalted be He) also says: ﴾And We shall turn their hearts and their eyes away (from guidance), as they refused to believe therein for the first time, and We shall leave them in their trespass to wander blindly.﴿ There are many Ayahs (Qur'anic verses) to that effect. We implore Allah (Exalted be He) to endow us and all Muslims with beneficial knowledge and righteous deeds. We ask Him to shower us with mercy and grant us understanding of Islam and steadfastness on it. We ask Allah (Exalted be He) to correct the Muslim rulers and leaders and support the truth with them - indeed, Allah is over everything Competent. May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon His Slave and Messenger Muhammad, his family, Companions and those who follow their guidance until the Day of Resurrection!

Questions on Adhan and Prayer

From `Abdul-`Aziz ibn `Abdullah ibn Baz to the honorable brother, A. M. Kh. from Ha'il may Allah help him and grant him more knowledge and faith! As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh (May Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you!)

Your revered letter reached me but without a date, may Allah grant you guidance! It was concerning a group of people in your district who claim that no one has knowledge of Shari`ah of the Prophet, his orders and prohibitions but them and those who follow in their footsteps. They also maintain that other people pave a way other than that of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). They do not support any scholars except Al-Albany Moreover, they give Fatwas that differ from that of scholars of Islam and the majority of scholars... You want illustrations for their claims and this is quite clear to us.

The Answer: Undoubtedly, those people had knowledge of a part of Shari`ah (Islamic Law) and missed a part. We implore Allah to guide us and them to the right path and grant us and them useful knowledge, penetrating insight, fairness and resorting to what is right. Some Salaf (righteous predecessor) said, "Religion, health and language are damaged by those who have half-knowledge."

The reason behind this is nothing but ignorance for those people and those like them are aware of some matters of Shari`ah and are unaware of many other matters. They think that they are right in their opinions even though they contradict the legal evidence of the Qur'an, Sunnah and opinions of Salaf. In sha' Allah (if Allah wills), we are going to elaborate on their ambiguous issues, which you mentioned in you letter.

First, they claimed that the conditions, pillars, obligations and invalidators of Salah were not authentically recorded from the Prophet. This, in fact, shows their complete ignorance and unawareness of Shari`ah since the conditions of Salah including purification, facing the Qiblah (direction faced for Prayer towards the Ka`bah) covering the `Awrah (private parts of the body that must be covered in public), being of sound mind, discerning and the occurrence of the due time, are substantiated by clear evidence from the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Prophet (peace be upon him) and similarly pillars, obligations and invalidators of prayer. This is quite clear for beginners and if one considers the sayings of scholars and reviews the books of Hadith such as "Bulugh-ul-Maram" and "Muntaqa Al-Akhbar", one knows these issues in detail.

They said, "Salah is not invalidated by many trivial acts, turning around, etc." This saying goes against the agreement of all scholars. There is no doubt that continuous deliberate messing around and continuous deliberate messing around invalidates Salah according to the agreement of all scholars, because the person who does so is playing in his Salah and does not observe tranquility and humbleness. The glorious Qur'an indicates that

among the characteristics of believers is humbleness during Salah. Besides, it is authentically reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) ordered the person who did not observe tranquility in his Salah to repeat it.

They sustained their claims of the validity of Salah in spite of numerous trivial actions by the fact that Al-Siddiq turned his face when people clapped strongly when he led them in prayer and the Prophet (peace be upon him) was absent by Banu `Amr ibn `Awf to reconcile between them. The Prophet (peace be upon him) came after Al-Siddiq said Takbirat-ul-Ihram (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]" upon starting Prayer). When people noticed the coming of the Prophet (peace be upon him), they clapped strongly. So, Al-Siddiq turned his face and the Prophet (peace be upon him) saw him and pointed to him to remain in his place but Abu Bakr praised Allah, glorified Him and then returned back. This story is well-known and reported in the Two Sahih (authentic) Books of Hadith (i.e. Al-Bukhari and Muslim) but it is not proof that doing trivial actions deliberately is fine in Salah. Yet, it indicates that there is no harm in turning one's face when necessary and this should happen by the face only not by the whole body. To bring the former story as evidence on the permissibility of numerous trifling reflects great ignorance.

Second, they are satisfied with one time of Taslim (salutation ending prayer) to the right side. This is the opinion of most scholars and not only theirs. However, the sound opinion supported by evidence is to offer two times of Taslim, for it is authentically reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him)

used to offer two times of Taslim and said, ﴾Pray as you have seen me praying.﴿ They brought many sayings in this concern and all their arguments are known to scholars and mentioned by scholars, who compiled books on the explanation of Hadith such as "Fath-ul-Bary," "Nail-ul-Awtar" and other books.

Third, they said that the word "Wa-Barakatuh" (and His Blessings) should be mentioned in Taslim. This, however, is not only their view but is also the view of some scholars. Besides, this was mentioned in the authentic Hadith of Wa'il ibn Hujr. Anyway, many authentic Hadiths of the Prophet (peace be upon him) did not refer to this word but the sound opinion is that there is no harm on the Imam (leader in congregational prayer), the one offering prayer behind an Imam or the one offering prayer alone if they did it occasionally. This is to reconcile between Hadiths but it is better to be satisfied with saying As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah (May Allah's Peace, Mercy be upon you), in accordance to the many authentic Hadiths in this regard. It might be right that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said it at times and thereupon if one says it at times, they apply all the Hadiths in this case. If one abandons it, which is the way of our scholars and majority of scholars, there is no harm. It is known that the Prophet (peace be upon him) gave orders to Abu Mahdhurah to perform Tarji` (dual pronouncement of the Testimony of Faith during the Adhan, one with a lower tone and one in a higher tone) in Makkah and this is authentically established and in spite of that he did not order Bilal

with this while Bilal was pronouncing Adhan (call to prayer) before him in Madinah. We can reconcile between Hadiths in this regard by saying that the Adhan of Bilal is allowable without making Tarji` and the Adhan of Abu Mahdhurah is also allowed including Tarji`. Therefore, if one does this or that, there is no harm. Also, Bilal used to say words of Iqamah (call to performing prayer) in odd numbers before the Prophet (peace be upon him), except Takbir (saying "Allah Akbar" [Allah is the Greatest]) and "Qad Qamat Al-Salah" i.e. "Salah is about to begin" [he said them twice] and on the other hand Abu Mahdhurah used to say all the words of Iqamah in even numbers, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) taught him and all of these are acts of Sunnah and there is no disagreement between the two Hadiths. However, some scholars are of the opinion that the better act is that of Bilal as this

agrees with the order of the Prophet (peace be upon him) until he (peace be upon him) died and Allah does not choose for His Prophet (peace be upon him) except the best. However, none of the two forms is wrong. Scholars call this difference of multiformity which is permissible. It includes the different words of Du`a'-ul-Istiftah (opening supplication when starting the Prayer), Ta`awwudh (seeking refuge with Allah), Tashahhud (a recitation in the sitting position in the second/ last unit of Prayer) and the like of things authentically referred to the Prophet. It is allowable to observe any of them but the difference is regarding what is better of them as mentioned previously regarding the words of the Adhan and Iqamah. These and similar issues should not be put to disagreement in order not to confuse people for these issues are known to scholars and the evidence on them are also known while there is no harm in observing any of them, as they are all allowable, praise be to Allah but ignorance leads people astray.

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Fourth, as for their claim that drawing a line on the ground does not satisfy to be a Sutrah (barrier placed in front of a person praying), this is a kind of imitation on their part who considered the Hadith that mentioned the line as weak and claimed that it is Hadith Mudtarib (a Hadith with disagreement over a transmitter or the text) such as Ibn Al-Salah and Al-`Iraqy. However, the correct opinion is that this is a Hadith Hasan (a Hadith whose chain of narration contains a narrator with weak exactitude, but is free from eccentricity or blemish) and includes no disagreement over the text or the transmitter as illustrated by Al-Hafizh ibn Hajar in his book Bulugh Al-Maram for he said concerning it, "This (Hadith) is narrated by Ahmad and Ibn Majah and authenticated by Ibn Hibban and those who claim this Hadith is Mudtarib are not right for it is a Hasan Hadith.

Fifth, they maintained that the Rak`ah (a unit of prayer) is not counted by completing Ruku` (bowing in prayer). This, in fact, is a weak opinion and contradicts the authentic Hadiths, the opinion of the Four Imams (Abu Hanifah, Malik, Al-Shafi`y, and Ahmad) and the majority of scholars. It is authentically reported in Sahih of Al-Bukhari (may Allah confer mercy upon them) on the authority of Abu Bakrah Al-Thaqafy (may Allah be pleased with him) that ﴾He came while the Prophet (peace be upon him) was in the Ruku', so he joined the congregation performing Ruku' before reaching the row. He then joined the row. After finishing the Salah, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said to him, "May Allah increase your zeal, but do not do it again."﴿ The Prophet (peace be upon him) did not order him to make up for the Rak`ah in which he caught up with the congregation during Ruku' and the reason was that he was excused for he did not catch up with them while standing where one recites Surah Al-Fatihah. He was not asked for Fatihah, as he missed standing and this is the opinion of most of scholars according to this authentic Hadith. Moreover, the majority of scholars are of the view that reciting Surah-Al-Fatihah is not obligatory on the person offering prayer behind an Imam and that the recitation of the Imam suffices him. However, the apparent meaning of the authentic Hadiths of the Prophet (peace be upon him) proves that reciting Surah-Al-Fatihah is obligatory

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on the one offering prayer behind the Imam. If a person could not catch up with the Imam except in Ruku` and then s/he misses the standing, s/he is no more asked for reciting Surah-Al-Fatihah according to both opinions in the issue. Among scholars who confirm the imposition of reciting Surah-Al-Fatihah on the person offering prayer behind an Imam is Imam Al-Shafi`y while in the meantime he absolves those who could not catch up with the Imam in standing. However, some Salaf confirmed that one in this case should offer the Rak`ah again but this is a weak and unsubstantiated opinion for it includes clear contradiction to the referred to Hadith of Abu Bakrah. One knows from this that indulging in these issues and circulating these feeble opinions is not from the practice of scholars.

Sixth, with regard to their view that people must observe Jalsat-ul-Istirahah (a brief sitting after prostration and before standing during the Prayer), this is invalid opinion and I know of no scholars who adopted it. In fact, scholars disagreed in regard to deeming it as recommendable or not, but the correct opinion is that it is recommended and not obligatory. Some scholars stated that it is only recommendable when necessary such as due to illness or old age and maintained that Allah's Messenger performed it at the end of his life when he became fat and heavy. This last opinion, however, is not that proper as it lacks evidence. The correct opinion is that it is among the recommended acts of Salah, but it is not obligatory. This is supported by that some of those who related the way of the Prophet's prayer mentioned it and the others did not. The reason for this, Allah knows best, is that the Prophet (peace be upon him) did not perform it regularly and therefore some of the narrators missed it. Moreover, some of the Prophet's companions deemed it a desirable act and the others did not recommend it and the cause is what we mentioned previously. Allah knows best.

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Seventh, they said that there is no stipulation for Jumu`ah Prayer and it is permitted to be offered in the desert. This is an invalid opinion that contradicts the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him), his act, the act of his companions and the agreement of the well-advised scholars. There were many desert-dwellers during the lifetime of the Prophet (peace be upon him) around Madinah and they did not offer Jumu`ah Prayer and the Prophet did not order them to offer it nor did he order women or sick people to offer it. All of these people and similarly travelers, used to offer it as Zhuhr (Noon Prayer). It is recorded in the Two Sahih (authentic) Books of Hadith (i.e., Al-Bukhari and Muslim) and other books of Hadith that during the Farewell Hajj of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and it was Friday, that the Prophet (peace be upon him) addressed people and reminded them of death and the Hereafter and ordered Bilal who announced Adhan and Iqamah. It went that the Prophet offered Zhuhr Prayer shortened as two Rak`ahs and after that Bilal said Iqamah and the Prophet offered the `Asr Prayer combined and shortened. This took place in `Uranah valley. Then the Prophet went to `Arafah and this was on Friday. The Prophet (peace be upon him) did not offer Jumu`ah Prayer and if he had offered it, the companions (may Allah be pleased with them) would have related it. Moreover, this is more sustained by the fact that the companions regarded the Prayer they offered as Zhuhr Prayer and the Prophet did not recite the Qur'an in it aloud, he did not say the sermon after Adhan and did not deliver two sermons but he made one sermon before Adhan. If the Prophet had offered these two Rak`ahs as Jumu`ah, the companions would have declared it Jumu`ah and the Prophet would have recited it aloud and offered two sermons after Adhan as he used to do

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when he (peace be upon him) was in Madinah. Besides, it has not been related that the Prophet (peace be upon him) offered Jumu`ah while being on a journey and if he did so even once, the companions (may Allah be pleased with them) would have narrated it as they would narrate lesser than this. Also, it is authentically reported on the authority of Ibn `Umar (may Allah be pleased with them) that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, ﴾He who catches up a Rak`ah of Jumu`ah (Friday) prayer should pray another one with it. (By doing so) he will complete his prayer.﴿ This Hadith clarifies that Jumu`ah Prayer is not regarded except by offering one Rak`ah and that whoever catches up with the congregation less than one Rak`ah should offer Zhuhr Prayer. **Eighth,** they stated that saying the following supplications after the Adhan ﴾O Allah! Lord of this perfect call (of not ascribing partners to You) and of the regular prayer which is going to be established!﴿ is Bida`ah (a matter innovated in religion). I do not know how they were confused in this, because it was reported

in Sahih Al-Bukhari on the authority of Jabir ibn `Abdullah Al-Ansary (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, ("He who says upon hearing the Adhan (call to prayer) ' O Allah, Lord of this perfect call (Da`wah) and of the established prayer (As-Salat), grant Muhammad the Wasilah and superiority, and raise him up to a praiseworthy position which You have promised him', it becomes incumbent upon me to intercede for him on the Day of Resurrection.") Also, it is recorded in the Sahih of

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Muslim on the authority of `Abdullah ibn Al-`As (may Allah be pleased with both of them) that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, (When you hear the Mu'adhdhin (caller to prayer), repeat what he says, then invoke a blessing on me, for everyone who invokes a blessing on me will receive ten blessings from Allah; then beg from Allah al-Wasilah for me, which is a rank in Paradise fitting for only one of Allah's servants, and I hope that I may be that one. If anyone who asks that I be given the Wasilah, he will be assured of my intercession.)

Ninth, as for their claim that the phrase "Al-Salah Khairun Min Al-Nawm" (Salah is better than sleep) is to be said in the first Adhan, this includes some detail. Some scholars thought that the first Adhan is that which is announced first, before the Adhan of Fajr (Dawn) Prayer but the matter is not so. We confirm that the first Adhan is that which is before Iqamah that is announced upon the occurrence of Fajr as Adhan and Iqamah are called two Adhans according to what is reported in the authentic Hadith in which the Prophet (peace be upon him) says, (There is between the two calls (Adhan and Iqama) a prayer. He repeated it twice.) It is clear that what is meant by two calls is Adhan and Iqamah and this is quite clear if we consider other Hadiths in this regard. Abu Mahdhurah used to say this phrase in the Adhan of the Fajr Prayer in Makkah and he said that the Prophet (peace be upon him) ordered him to

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say it in the Adhan of the Fajr Prayer. Abu Mahdhurah entitled this Adhan as the first Adhan, which implies that he means the Adhan that is said before Iqamah. We found nothing in the wordings of the Hadith of Abu Mahdhurah indicating that he used to say another Adhan besides the Adhan of Fajr Prayer. However, we knew this from the Hadith of Bilal in Ramadan, particularly, in which the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, ("So that the one standing in prayer (Tahajjud) from among you may return and the one sleeping from among you may awaken.") We also do not know that Bilal used to say an Adhan other than the Adhan of the Fajr except in Ramadan; he used to say the Adhan when dawn occurred while in Ramadan, he used to cooperate with Ibn Um Maktum and say Adhan a little before dawn and after that Ibn Um Maktum would say Adhan when dawn occurs.

Supposing that Bilal used to say it in his Adhan before dawn and Abu Mahdhurah used to say it in his Adhan at dawn, this should be regarded as a difference and there is no harm in that but it should be said in one of them only and especially if the Mu'adhdhin (the person saying Adhan) is one person so that people do not get confused. Accordingly, if people in a country agreed to say it in the Adhan at dawn, which is adopted in this country, there is no harm, especially the scholar of Da`wah adopted it long time ago and they found no unlikeness in this regard, taking into consideration that they are known for glorification of Sunnah, maintaining it, and calling to refuse anything that contradicts it.

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If people agree to have it in the Adhan that is pronounced before dawn, there is no harm in that as both of them are called Fajr Adhan. However, it is better to adhere to the explicit meaning of Hadiths,

which requires one to say it in the Adhan said at the occurrence of dawn, as this is better and more close to Hadiths reported in this regard for those who considered them and knew that Iqamah may be called second Adhan and the Adhan is called first Adhan. Moreover, it is reported in some Hadiths that the Adhan that is said on Friday after the Imam sits on the pulpit is called the first Adhan as, after it, there is Iqamah which is called the second Adhan. It is authentically reported in the Sahih of Al-Bukhari from `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) what indicates that the Adhan of Fajr is called the first Adhan and the Iqamah is called the second Adhan as mentioned previously. I implore Allah to grant us, you and all our brothers understanding of the religion and adherence to it and to set right our deeds and hearts. I ask Him to protect us and all Muslims from speaking in His Name without knowledge, for He is the All-Hearer and Ever Near.

As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh

143- Importance of religious knowledge in fighting destructive thought

All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds, and the good end will be for the pious. May peace and blessings be upon the Servant and Messenger of Allah, the best of His Creatures, whom He entrusted with His Revelation; our Prophet Muhammad ibn `Abdullah, his family, his Companions and those who follow his guidance until the Day of Recompense!

Dear brothers and sisters, firstly I salute you with the greeting of Islam: As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh (May Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you!), I then thank Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) that He made us gather. I ask Him (Exalted be He) to bless our meeting, make it useful for all of us, and a means for pleasing and drawing closer to Him, eliminating the reasons of corruption and trials, supporting the truth and warding off evil. I thank the people in charge of this project for inviting me to speak to you, and answer your questions. I ask Allah (Glorified be He) to reward them with the best for their efforts. I supplicate to Him to make them and us among the guided.

I also ask Him for success to support the truth, ward off falsehood and to help me give the questioners the correct answers that please Him (Glorified be He).

The title is, as you heard "The importance of knowledge in fighting destructive ideas". This is the title of the speech I will deliver to my Muslim brothers and children.

There is no doubt that knowledge is the key to all good and the means to fulfill the Ordinances of Allah and abstain from what He has forbidden. Actions come after having knowledge, for those whom Allah has granted success. Knowledge supports the determination to do good, because there is no Iman (faith), action or striving except based on knowledge. Words and actions which are not based on knowledge are worthless and may incur bad consequences and great corruption.

We worship Allah, fulfill His due Rights, spread His Religion, fight destructive ideas, false claims and deviant activities by useful knowledge received from the Book of Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) and the Sunnah of His Messenger (peace be upon him). Likewise, through knowledge, we perform the obligatory duties, fear Allah and discover the truths which are stated in the Book of Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) and the Sunnah of His Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says in the Ever-Glorious Qur'an: ﴾And no example or similitude do they bring (to oppose or to find fault in you or in this Qur'ân), but We reveal to you the truth (against that similitude or example), and the better explanation thereof.﴿

All vanities and falsehood that evil people present and use to deceive people and cause them to doubt the Laws of Allah and the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him), will be refuted and the Laws revealed by Allah will all the more be taught with stronger and clearer words, giving certain

evidence that fills the hearts and supports the truth. That is because the knowledge learned from the Book of Allah and the purified Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him) is revealed by the All-Wise, the All-Knowing, Who knows the conditions of His Servants, their problems and what is hidden in their hearts, whether good or bad. He fully knows the claims of evil people. He sent down His Book to explain the truth, uncover falsehood and establish the proofs on the same instructions which all Prophets came with. Allah has sent His Messenger Muhammad (peace be upon him) with guidance and the true religion, and sent down His Book as an explanation to everything, and as a guidance, mercy and glad tidings for all Muslims.

The evil people become active when people of knowledge retreat and ignorance prevails and the arena becomes empty of those who say: "Allah says and the Messenger says". Then they show their teeth against others and become active in their falsehood, because of the lack of advocates of the truth, faith and insight. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) mentioned in His Book everything collectively in some places and in details in other places. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says:

﴾And We have sent down to you the Book (the Qur'an) as an exposition of everything﴿ This is the speech of the All-Wise, the All-Knowing, which cannot be denied or opposed. Allah (He may be Glorified) explained in his saying: ﴾and whose words can be truer than those of Allâh? (Of course, none).﴿ Allah explains in His saying: ﴾And We have sent down to you the Book (the Qur'an) as an exposition of everything, a guidance, a mercy, and glad tidings for those who have submitted themselves (to Allâh as Muslims).﴿ that it also contains guidance, mercy and glad tidings besides being an explanation to everything. It is an explanation of the truth, its ways, methodologies and calling to it in the clearest statement and the most illustrative indication. It is guidance for the world regarding all they need from their Lord and what leads them to what pleases Him and makes them escape anything that brings about His Wrath. It shows them the way of success and happiness, in addition of being a mercy in explanation and instruction. It is guidance, benevolence, glad tidings and comfort for the hearts due to the explained truths and the guidance it gives to the insights that affect the hearts, relieve the souls, and open the hearts for them because of their simplicity and clarity. Allah (Glorified be He) says: ﴾O mankind! There has come to you a good advice from your Lord (i.e. the Qur'ân, enjoining all that is good and forbidding all that is evil), and a healing for that (disease of ignorance, doubt, hypocrisy and differences) which is in your breasts, - a guidance and a mercy (explaining lawful and unlawful things) for the believers.﴿ Allah (He may be Glorified) also says: ﴾O you who believe! Obey Allâh and obey the Messenger (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم), and those of you (Muslims) who are in authority. (And) if you differ in anything amongst yourselves, refer it to Allâh and His Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم), if you believe in Allâh and in the Last Day. That is better and more suitable for final determination.﴿

Allah (He may be Glorified) also says: ﴾And in whatsoever you differ, the decision thereof is with Allâh (He is the ruling Judge). (And say O Muhammad صلى الله عليه و سلم to these polytheists:) Such is Allâh, my Lord in Whom I put my trust, and to Him I turn (in all of my affairs and) in repentance.﴿ Had it not been that the Book of Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) and the Sunnah of His Prophet (peace be upon him) contained guidance and enough knowledge, He would not have directed people to them. If resorting to them was not useful, He would not direct people to them in settling disputes and disagreement because of their power of guidance, clear explanation and solving problems and eliminating falsehood. Then Allah states that doing so is a condition of Iman (faith), saying: ﴾if you believe in Allâh and in the Last Day.﴿ Then He mentions that it is for the good of the

Servants in the present, future and in the final end. It means that their referring the matter of dispute to Allah and His Messenger is better for them in this world and the next.

Thus, we know that the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger contain a solution for all problems and an explanation of what people need to know regarding their religion and the way of settling their disputes. It is the means of support for anyone calling to the truth which refutes the claims of adversaries with clear evidence; therefore, Allah (Glorified be He) says: ﴾And no example or similitude do they bring (to oppose or to find fault in you or in this Qur'ân), but We reveal to you the truth (against that similitude or example), and the better explanation thereof.﴿ This includes any claim put forth as evidence or a doctrine claimed to be true. All this is disclosed by this Book and the Sunnah of His Messenger (peace be upon him).

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All problems, doubts, false claims and destructive doctrines that they cast are removed by understanding this Book (the Qur'an) and the Sunnah of the Messenger (peace be upon him). It is known that destructive ideas, false principles and deviated doctrines are countless. The people who try to confuse the truth with falsehood are also countless. Likewise, the advocates of falsehood and authors who hinder people from the Way of Allah are countless, but they are known to Allah. They mystify matters by distorting words. There are many preachers and speakers now on the radio, television and every other means such as the press and gatherings where everyone calls to his own doctrine, ideas and mislead others. There is no way out of these trials that puts an end to them except by referring to the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him). When weighed with this Great Scale of truth, what is right will be distinguished from wrong, true from false and guidance from misguidance. This way, truth and its advocates will prevail, whereas falsehood and its advocates will be defeated. Any communists or socialist advocates who deny the existence of Allah, saying: "There is no God and life is material", and deny the truth, and the textual and logic-based evidence stated in the Book of Allah that indicates the existence of the Creator, His Supreme Power and All-Inclusive Knowledge, must be refuted by referring oneself to the Book of Allah and reciting the Ayahs

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which indicate His existence (Exalted be He) and that He is the All-Wise Maker and Creator of everything.

In His Ever-Glorious Book, Allah (may be Glorified) guides mankind to this truth and explains that He is the Lord of all the Worlds, the All-Knowing Creator Who created everything. He supports the truth and gives the evidence on this in many places in His Book in order for the seekers of the truth to depend on. Allah (Glorified be He) says: ﴾And your Ilâh (God) is One Ilâh (God - Allâh), Lâ ilâha illa Huwa (there is none who has the right to be worshipped but He), the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.﴿ Then, He (He may be Glorified) says after that: ﴾Verily! In the creation of the heavens and the earth, and in the alternation of night and day, and the ships which sail through the sea with that which is of use to mankind, and the water (rain) which Allâh sends down from the sky and makes the earth alive therewith after its death, and the moving (living) creatures of all kinds that He has scattered therein, and in the veering of winds and clouds which are held between the sky and the earth, are indeed Ayât (proofs, evidence, signs, etc.) for people of understanding.﴿ And: ﴾O mankind! Worship your Lord (Allâh), Who created you and those who were before you so that you may become Al-Muttaqûn (the pious - See V.2:2).﴿ ﴾Who has made the earth a resting place for you, and the sky as a canopy, and sent down water (rain) from the sky and brought forth therewith fruits as a provision for you. Then do not set up rivals unto Allâh (in worship) while you know (that He Alone has the right to be worshipped).﴿ And: ﴾Your Ilâh (God) is only Allâh, (the One) Lâ ilâha illa Huwa (none

has the right to be worshipped but He). He has full knowledge of all things.﴾

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Allah (Glorified be He) also says: ﴾And your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him.﴿ He (Glorified be He) also says: ﴾You (Alone) we worship, and You (Alone) we ask for help (for each and everything).﴿ In addition to many other Ayahs with which Allah (Exalted be He) guides to the truth of His being the Lord of mankind and all existence. All messengers came to preach this truth. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾And verily, We have sent among every Ummah (community, nation) a Messenger (proclaiming): "Worship Allâh (Alone), and avoid (or keep away from) Tâghût (all false deities i.e. do not worship Tâghût besides Allâh)."﴿ And: ﴾And We did not send any Messenger before you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) but We revealed to him (saying): Lâ ilâha illa Ana [none has the right to be worshipped but I (Allâh)], so worship Me (Alone and none else)."﴿ And: ﴾That is because Allâh - He is the Truth (the only True God of all that exists, Who has no partners or rivals with Him), and what they (the polytheists) invoke besides Him, it is Bâtil (falsehood). And verily, Allâh - He is the Most High, the Most Great.﴿ And: ﴾So worship Allâh (Alone) by doing religious deeds sincerely for Allâh's sake only.﴿ ﴾Surely the religion (i.e. the worship and the obedience) is for Allâh only.﴿ And: ﴾Allâh is the Creator of all things, and He is the Wakîl (Trustee, Disposer of affairs, Guardian) over all things.﴿ And: ﴾Is there any creator other than Allâh﴿

Allah then explains the proofs in many places, which, when reflected on by a believer, they will surely realize that the textual evidence is supported by visible and palpable evidence.

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Therefore, after His Statement: ﴾O mankind! Worship your Lord (Allâh)﴿ Allah (Glorified be He) mentions the proof, saying: ﴾Who created you and those who were before you so that you may become Al-Muttaqûn (the pious).﴿ The meaning is that our Creator is the only One worthy of worship because He created us and provides for all creatures. This is a matter which is known by Fitrah (innate pure nature) and sound minds. People do not create themselves, but are created by their Creator. Allah is the Creator by textual and logic-based evidence. Then Allah (Glorified be He) says: ﴾Who has made the earth a resting place for you, and the sky as a canopy, and sent down water (rain) from the sky and brought forth therewith fruits as a provision for you. Then do not set up rivals unto Allâh (in worship) while you know (that He Alone has the right to be worshipped).﴿

Allah (may He be Exalted and Glorified) teaches how to realize the truth behind these visible created things which are perceived by the mind and known to every human. So, He made the earth spread out to sleep on, walk on, and use it to graze our cattle, carry things on, plant trees on and extract minerals out of. He also sends down rain from the sky and thereby brings forth fruits for us. Who sends down the rain? Who brings forth these fruits of which people and animals eat? They are all from the great Signs of Allah which indicate His Absolute Power and testify that He is the Lord of all the Worlds.

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A firmly set land which our Lord made stable with mountains as pegs. He made it flat and still so that we can live on it, and our animals as well, and feel comfort. We drive our cars on them and our planes fly in their atmosphere. We enjoy all that Allah has created. Likewise, He created the sky over us which He adorned with moving and static stars. He made the sun and the moon therein in order

for the Servants to realize the Power of the Great Creator, the Most-High, Who has no partner or associate (Glorified and Exalted be He). These various plants and kinds of fruits offering lots of benefits and serving great interests; with different shapes, colors, sizes, tastes and benefits. They manifest the Power of Allah and His uncontested right of exclusive worship. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾And your Ilâh (God) is One Ilâh (God - Allâh), Lâ ilâha illa Huwa (there is none who has the right to be worshipped but He), the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.﴿ ﴾Verily! In the creation of the heavens and the earth, and in the alternation of night and day, and the ships which sail through the sea with that which is of use to mankind, and the water (rain) which Allâh sends down from the sky and makes the earth alive therewith after its death, and the moving (living) creatures of all kinds that He has scattered therein, and in the veering of winds and clouds which are held between the sky and the earth, are indeed Ayât (proofs, evidence, signs, etc.) for people of understanding.﴿

Allah (Glorified be He) gives us evidence through these signs which we witness, see and feel: ﴾Verily, in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and in the alternation of night and day﴿ These Heavens with their vastness, loftiness and wonders; this Earth with its spaciousness and spread surface

on which are rivers, mountains and so on; then the alteration of night and day and the rain which Allah sends down from the sky and the benefits He brings out of the sea and the ships that travel on its water carrying people's needs and also transporting them from a country to another.

Then Allah sends down rain from the sky to give life to the Earth after its death, and has dispersed on it creatures of all kinds. Also, the signs of directing the winds, and the controlled clouds between Heaven and Earth. These great proofs guide those who reflect on them to the truth that their Creator exists; He brought them into being out of nothing. Verily, He is the Lord of all the Worlds (may He be Exalted and Glorified). None of the creatures can have an existence independent of Him (Glorified and Exalted be He). Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾And among His Signs is that the heaven and the earth stand by His Command.﴿ These signs which we observe and proofs which we read and learn can only be beneficial to people of sound minds and upright insight. Therefore, Allah (Glorified be He) says in the last portion of the Ayah: ﴾are indeed Ayât (proofs, evidence, signs, etc.) for people of understanding.﴿

The Messengers (peace be upon them) are the sincerest of all people who established the proofs and were supported by miracles to prove their truthfulness. They informed us that Allah is the Sole Creator of all this; He is our Lord and Creator.

He is the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful, the One Who is Free from all imperfections, the All-Holy; in addition to His other Magnificent Names. This is the best answer to the advocates of communism, socialism and other sects which deny the existence of Allah. Do these creatures create themselves?

Can a rational person say such a thing? If you say to a rational person that water has created itself, he would say: you are crazy. Likewise, a cup of tea, a cup of coffee, a spoon or a stick whose makers are known, so how about this great universe which was created by the Al-Mighty Creator from nothing. He has placed countless signs and benefits in it. He is the Originator (Glorified be He) of all that exists. Glorified and Exalted is He! High above the falsehood that the wrongdoers say!

The Creator has explained His Names which befit His Sublime and Divine Being. The Messengers explained His Attributes and Names; they taught and guided people to them. The proofs supported their validity; especially the testimony of our Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him); the truest

and best of all Prophets. Allah sent him with His Great Book and the universal Message in which He explains everything. Then comes the role of the advocates of Masonry who want to make people regress to living like animals, putting everything on equal footing, fighting high moral standards and righteous deeds to make people like beasts which cannot distinguish the truth from falsehood or the good from the bad.

This is against what the Messengers (peace be upon them) called for and against what the Glorious Qur'an preaches. It is also against the sound minds and the Fitrah with which Allah created people. Allah (Glorified be He) created the people with the ability to recognize high moral standards, righteous deeds, justice, truth and to hate oppression, aggression and harm.

Allah has created His Servants and has given them the ability to distinguish a father from a son, a brother from a sister, a wife from a husband, even animals can distinguish that.

Likewise, those who advocate pornography and do not see any sin in people doing what they want and allowing themselves to have whatever pleasures or immoralities they desire; they are all atheists and misled people. Allah has abolished this doctrine and explained that He sent the Messengers and revealed the Books to explain His due Rights upon mankind and explain the lawful good things that He permitted and the unlawful evil things that He prohibited. Allah (may He be Exalted and Glorified) commanded His Servants to adhere to the Law the Prophets were sent with and avoid whatever contradicts it.

Allah (Glorified be He) has clarified in the Heavenly Books the details of the lawful and the unlawful, guidance and falsehood, and good and evil.

Pornographers and freemasons have turned away from all this and cast them behind their backs; they neither adhere to good morals nor sound logic.

They refuse to follow what the Messengers came with of guidance, and discrimination between truth and falsehood, guidance and error. Anyone who contemplates the Book of Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) and the Sunnah of His Prophet (peace be upon him) and thinks about the conditions of the world, will know that the truth lies in what the Messengers came with such as the explained laws of what Allah has permitted and prohibited. They were sent to distinguish between good and bad, lawful and forbidden according to the Shar` (Law) of Allah in order for societies to be properly established on the right basis of righteousness, guidance and good morals that preserve a person in terms of mentality, religion, property, person, offspring, wife...etc.

No one is entitled to go beyond their limits and attack others. This way, the community will be secure, conditions and manners will be upright, people will be secure and freedom will be achieved for everyone; in taking and giving, selling and purchasing. Every person will then take that which is lawful for them and possess that which is earned by Shar`y (Islamic legal) means, acting upon what benefits and causes harm to no one.

As for those who call for other ideologies such as Qadianiyyah and their like of those who call to follow a new Prophet or a new Messenger, their claim is void and their beliefs are false and misleading, because Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) explained in His Truth-Clarifying Book that Muhammad (peace be upon him) is the Last of the Prophets. This was reported in the Hadiths Mutawatir (Hadiths reported by a significant number of narrators throughout the chain of narration, whose agreement upon a lie is impossible), and was announced by the previous Prophets. Allah (May He be Exalted) says:

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﴾Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allâh and the last (end) of the Prophets.﴿ But there are naive people who cannot distinguish these claims, miss everything, and do not discriminate between truth and falsehood, guidance and misguidance.

So, any claim raised will confuse them, because of their lack of knowledge and insight. Therefore, the voice of this man, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, and his false claim found its way to these people who followed him and believed in what he said and wrote down in this matter, where he claimed himself to be the last of Prophets and Messengers, which blatantly goes against the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him).

How can this possibly be accepted? How can people of sound minds, who can read and write, be deceived by such a claim? The falsehood of this claim is crystal-clear. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) has given signs, lessons and admonition, but as Allah (Glorified be He) says: ﴾Verily, it is not the eyes that grow blind, but it is the hearts which are in the breasts that grow blind.﴿ Likewise, Bahiyyah, Babiyyah and their like who made false claims, who themselves are astray and deceive the weak-minded people who follow their claims.

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Their leader claimed that he is a prophet then claimed to be the Lord of all the Worlds!

Despite their glaring falsehood, we find followers, callers and gatherings which circulate their false claims and call to their beliefs. Many of them know the truth and the falsity of their claims, but pretend to support their falsehood because they have some personal interests, so they follow their false way. They are like animals and even worse, as Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾Or do you think that most of them hear or understand? They are only like cattle - nay, they are even farther astray from the Path (i.e. even worse than cattle).﴿ Allah (He may be Glorified) says: ﴾And surely, We have created many of the jinn and mankind for Hell. They have hearts wherewith they understand not, and they have eyes wherewith they see not, and they have ears wherewith they hear not (the truth). They are like cattle, nay even more astray; those! They are the heedless ones.﴿

Verily, these people are led astray like the people of Pharoah were misled by Pharoah and the people of Al-Namrud by Al-Namrud.

This helpless person who urinates, defecates, eats, drinks and feels the pain of everything, how could he be a Lord or God? How can this be acceptable to him or to his followers? But the matter as Allah (Exalted be He) says:

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﴾Verily, it is not the eyes that grow blind, but it is the hearts which are in the breasts that grow blind.﴿ Allah (He may be Glorified) also says: ﴾Or do you think that most of them hear or understand? They are only like cattle﴿ Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) also says: ﴾And who is more astray than one who follows his own lusts, without guidance from Allâh?﴿

Likewise, the Antichrist who will come at the end of time and will be followed by a lot of ignorant people, who lack insight, and so will be blind to the falsehood he will circulate and the unusual acts he shall do that will only deceive the people weak in soul and mind.

Every doctrine and every false call finds followers and supporters with no hearts or guidance. As for the way of Salaf (righteous predecessors), it is clearer than the sun in the middle of the day, because

it is based on clear proofs, sound evidence and decisive facts for any person of the least discernment who wishes to know the truth. Allah has explained in His Book and in the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him) that good and success are attained by adhering to the Book of Allah, the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and the way of the Salaf from the Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet, may Allah be pleased with them) and those who followed them righteously. The callers to the truth can refute the claims of those perverted people by the knowledge they obtain from the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him);

and by the knowledge they gain through their sound minds, sharp discernment and pure nature on the basis of the guidance learned from the Book of Allah, the Sunnah of His Messenger (peace be upon him); and by what they have learned about Allah through His creatures that all testify to His Power, Greatness, Exclusive Right of worship and the truthfulness of His Messengers (peace be upon them). We should know that the truth which they preached is the truth found in the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him) which clarifies the lawful and the prohibited, guidance and misguidance, the Commands of Allah and His prohibitions and what He has informed about Paradise and Hellfire...etc.

As for Resurrection, Paradise, Hell and other matters related to the Last Day, which those people, Communists and all atheists deny, all these allegations are false and against the decisive proofs.

Their claims are refutable and invalid, because there are countless proofs on the resurrection of the dead and their standing for judgment before the Lord of all the Worlds. All that Allah has created in this world is a witness to the Power of Allah (Exalted be He) and His Exclusive Right to be worshipped. Allah sends down the rain upon the barren land and, by it, revives it after death and causes plants to come forth and every kind of fruit, as He wills.

The One Who caused this plant to grow and granted us all these fruits is Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He), Who sends down this rain and revives the barren land that brings forth plants and fruits.

He is the One who will revive the dead and resurrect them from their graves. Everyone will stand before Him (Glorified and Exalted be He) to be asked about all that they did and earned in this world.

In the same way, Allah has created our father Adam of dust and then Allah created his offspring from a weak fluid which He formed into `Alaqah (clot; a piece of coagulated blood) then into Mudghah (small lump of flesh) then an embryo and finally a full human endowed with hearing, sight, reason, senses and organs. Gradually man grows and becomes a great human being who takes, gives, thinks, learns and produces.

These great proofs indicate the Ability of Allah and the truthfulness of the Messengers and their informing that there, in the Hereafter, will be a gathering before the Lord (Exalted be He) in which the truth shall be upheld and people of righteous deeds shall be rewarded with the best reward, enter Paradise and be saved from Hell and enemies of Allah shall be humiliated and cast into Hellfire forever.

Every rational person can see that there are people who oppress others and people whose rights are usurped and people who cannot protect their property and themselves. The oppressor may die without rendering back the right to its owner, nor the oppressed being treated justly; will this eliminate the rights of the oppressed, the needy and the helpless?

No, because the All-Wise, All-Knowing Creator has set a fixed date for justice, which is the Day of Recompense, where an oppressed person who has not been given their full rights in this world shall be avenged and Allah shall punish the oppressor in the way they deserve.

Verily, this world is not the place of reward and punishment, but it is the place of test, trial, work, joy and sorrows. A wronged person may regain their rights in it or it may be postponed to the Day of Judgment for a great wisdom, where Allah shall retaliate against those wrongdoers, as He (Glorified be He) says: ﴿Consider not that Allâh is unaware of that which the Zâlimûn (polytheists, wrong-doers) do, but He gives them respite up to a Day when the eyes will stare in horror.﴾

On that Terrible Day, Allah shall treat the oppressed people with justice, give them their rewards and retaliate against those who wronged them. Allah may bring down a quick punishment on the oppressor in this world, as He did with many past nations. Allah may also postpone the defending of the oppressed, the punishing of the oppressor, then the due rights are given on this Great Day; the Day of Judgment when the eyes will stare in horror; all this is true.

The All-Wise, All-Knowing and Able over everything will not allow the rights of the oppressed to be wasted. Therefore, He has informed us that there will be resurrection, and there will also be retribution and judgment. There are numerous proofs on this from the Qur'an, the Sunnah, the Ijma` (consensus) of people of sound minds and intact nature. They also indicate that there must be retribution and judgment and that resurrection is true, Paradise is true and Hellfire is true.

All these truths are stated in Heavenly Books, the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and supported by Ijma` of Muslims.

Certainly, Fitrah and sound mind testify to that, for we witness oppressors and oppressed people who remain undefended, their rights not given back. There must be a Day when they shall be judged and there shall be retribution for everyone for what they did.

We find pious believers, who are rightly guided and strive in the way of good, yet they do not have as much as those who transgressed the Limits of Allah and wronged the people, who - in spite of their wrongdoing - possess bundles of money, lofty palaces, servants and luxury.

There are many pious people who are deprived of all this. Therefore, there must be a Day on which they will meet their Lord to be given high status, great reward and many bounties for their patience and righteous deeds. They will have great reward, high status, ample good, palaces, servants and countless blessings for the pious work they did. On the other hand, Allah (Exalted be He) shall punish the wrongdoers, who overstepped the boundaries and rejected the truth. Those who are satisfied with the worldly life; deceived by its pleasures and drawn away by its allure; they will receive the punishment they deserve.

They will suffer disgrace and the worst end, because of their transgression, turning away from Allah, overstepping the boundaries of His Law, repaying His favors with ingratitude, oppressing His Servants and their reluctance to show obedience.

Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) shall punish them as they deserve. When a rational person of a sound nature contemplates these matters properly, they will realize that returning to Allah is true and that the claims which the atheists, communists, idol-worshippers and other deniers of the Hereafter and resurrection are of the worst false claims. It will become evident that their claims are groundless and their sayings are false.

Likewise, the preachers of false religions, calls and destructive ideas are all on the same track. But when people of sound minds, precise discernment and pure nature reflect on them, they will realize

their falsehood and their fake evidence by measuring them against the Qur'an, the Sunnah and authentic books. Allah (Glorified be He) has created signs and provided the proofs supporting the truth from His Book, the Sunnah of His Prophet (peace be upon him) and the power of discernment He endowed mankind with; in addition to all the creatures which He has created in this universe. All these signs are proofs of His Wisdom and that He is the All-Knowing, the All-Bountiful Creator, having power over everything and the only One Who is worthy of worship - without a partner.

It is important for knowledge seekers - wherever they are - to recite the Book of Allah and to make understanding it and reflection on it one of their paramount concerns.

They should devote care to proper recitation and contemplation of its meanings and clear proofs on the truthfulness of what the Messengers conveyed and what is explained in the Qur'an and on the falsehood of the statements made by evil people wherever they are.

Anyone who reflects on the Qur'an seeking guidance, Allah will honor them, give them insight and help them achieve their aim. Allah (He may be Glorified) says: ﴾Verily, this Qur'ân guides to that which is most just and right﴿ Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) also says: ﴾Say: "It is for those who believe, a guide and a healing."﴿

Likewise, when a believer reflects on the purified Sunnah and the way the Prophet (peace be upon him) dealt with his enemies in Makkah and Madinah, they will feel the truth and know that the advocates of the truth are victorious and are always tested. Whoever misses victory in this world, shall not miss their reward and compensation in the Hereafter, as Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾Verily, We will indeed make victorious Our Messengers and those who believe (in the Oneness of Allâh - Islâmic Monotheism) in this world's life and on the Day when the witnesses will stand forth, (i.e. Day of Resurrection) -﴿ ﴾The Day when their excuses will be of no profit to Zâlimûn (polytheists, wrong-doers and disbelievers in the Oneness of Allâh). Theirs will be the curse, and theirs will be the evil abode (i.e. painful torment in Hell-fire).﴿ Allah (Glorified be He) has promised those who work towards the Hereafter with victory in this world and reward in the Hereafter. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says:

﴾Verily, Allâh will help those who help His (Cause). Truly, Allâh is All-Strong, All-Mighty.﴿ ﴾Those (Muslim rulers) who, if We give them power in the land, (they) enjoin Iqamat-as-Salât [i.e. to perform the five compulsory congregational Salât (prayers) (the males in mosques)], to pay the Zakât and they enjoin Al-Ma'rûf (i.e. Islâmic Monotheism and all that Islâm orders one to do), and forbid Al-Munkar (i.e. disbelief, polytheism and all that Islâm has forbidden) [i.e. they make the Qur'ân as the law of their country in all the spheres of life]. And with Allâh rests the end of (all) matters (of creatures).﴿ Allah (may He be Exalted and Glorified) has promised victory in these two Ayahs to those who work for the truth, perform Salah (Prayer), give Zakah to those who deserve it, enjoin good and forbid evil. Victory includes success and authority in this world and success and the Good Pleasure of Allah on the Day of Resurrection when the witnesses shall stand.

This is victory to the believers and humiliation to the disbelievers. The believers shall win Paradise, whereas humiliation and sorrow will cover the faces of the disbelievers and their final abode will be Hellfire.

Concerning this meaning Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾Allâh has promised those among you who believe and do righteous good deeds, that He will certainly grant them succession to (the present rulers) in the land, as He granted it to those before them, and that He will grant them the authority to

practise their religion which He has chosen for them (i.e. Islâm). And He will surely give them in exchange a safe security after their fear (provided) they (believers) worship Me and do not associate anything (in worship) with Me.) There are many Ayahs to the same effect.

Many wonders are revealed to anyone who reflects on the conditions of the people of knowledge who excelled in this nation and reflected on the Book of their Lord and the Sunnah of His Prophet (peace be upon him)

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and learned the knowledge which helped them acquire a correct understanding of the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) from the writings and reported narrations of the Sahabah (may Allah be pleased with them) and Tabi`un (Followers, the generation after the Companions of the Prophet) and those who followed them righteously such as Abu Al-`Abbas ibn Taymiyah (may Allah be merciful to him) and his two students; Ibn Al-Qayyim, Al-Hafizh ibn Kathir and those who were prominent in this field.

Yes, whoever thinks of their conditions and that Allah has granted them understanding of their statements and writings, shall see wonders, learn significant lessons, obtain valuable sciences, approach enlightened hearts and hear clear proofs that will guide anyone who adheres to them to the ways of happiness and uprightness.

This way, they will reach, by the Help of Allah, the sought-after goal and will be fortified by sciences, knowledge and enjoy the tranquility of learning the truth with which Allah sent His Messengers, revealed in His Scriptures and was followed by the Salaf of this nation.

It will become clear that those who disagree with them from the callers to aberrance and error have nothing but casting doubts and some false claims which are of no avail.

We should know that the student of knowledge is the one who distinguishes the truth from falsehood through clear proofs and certain evidence. They read the books of the guided Imams,

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take from them that which is in conformity with the truth and leaves the weak views and those which are contradictory to the truth. From these prominent Imams is Shaykh Muhammad ibn `Abdul-Wahhab (may Allah be merciful to him) and his supporters during the twelfth centuries who became outstanding in this field. They wrote great successful writings and sent letters to people and refuted the opponents. They explained the truth in their messages and compositions with proofs from the Qur'an and the Sunnah. Shaykh `Abdul-Rahman ibn Qasim (may Allah be merciful to him) gathered many of the these writings in His Book entitled (Al-Durar Al-Sunniyyah Fi Al-Ajwibah Al-Najdiyyah).

Anyone who considers the proofs which Shaykh Muhammad ibn `Abdul-Wahhab and his students wrote, would see the truth, the decisive evidence and clear proofs which show the invalidity of the opponents' views and their doubts and explain the truth with clear evidence. Although they are late scholars, they were guided to show the truth and explain its proofs.

They explained the issues of Tawhid (belief in the Oneness of Allah/ monotheism), refuted idol advocates, grave worshippers and became prominent in this field. They were on the straight path; the way of the Salaf and they depended on clear proofs from the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him). Moreover, they gave much care to the books of Hadith and Tafsir (exegesis of the meanings of the Qur'an) and became prominent in this field until, through them, Allah made truth prevail, falsehood to be defeated and established the clear evidence by their efforts.

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He made them spread Islam, uplift the banner of Jihad (striving in the Cause of Allah) and caused blessings and good to gush forth on their hands. The advocates of the truth in all countries who knew their books, the truthfulness of their claims and the soundness of their methodology follow their call and resort to their writing in answering the enemies of Islam everywhere such as the followers of polytheism, heresies and superstitions.

I ask Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) to guide us to do the things that please Him and to mend our hearts and deeds. I ask Him to make us guided and guiding, righteous and acting for righteousness and to grant us good understanding of religion. I also ask Him (Glorified and Exalted be He) to make His religion victorious, to make His Word uppermost, and set right the conditions of Muslims everywhere. I ask Him to make their rulers pious, guided and guiding. I ask Him to help them rule by Shari`ah and appeal to its judgment, and guide them to every good, and uphold the truth through them, for He is the Most Generous, All-Bountiful. May peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family and Companions!

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144- Knowing the rulings of Allah is of the Most important duties of a Muslim

All praise be to Allah. May peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, the Servant of Allah, His Messenger and His best creature, and upon his family, his Companions and whoever follows his guidance until the Day of Resurrection! To proceed:

Knowing the rulings of Allah is an essential duty of every Muslim; male and female regarding every matter they need to know in order to worship their Lord properly based on knowledge.

A Muslim can neither understand his religion nor act according to it unless he knows its rulings, pays attention to them and exerts his effort and power to be acquainted with them. Thus his worship to his Lord can be built on a true and firm basis. Whomever Allah grants success to know the rulings of this religion and acts according to them, verily he is guided to Al-Sirat-ul-Mustaqim (the Straight Path) and he will get much goodness.

Allah (Glorified be He) says: ﴾He grants Hikmah to whom He pleases, and he, to whom Hikmah is granted, is indeed granted abundant good. But none remember (will receive admonition) except men of understanding.﴿

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Al-Hafizh ibn Kathir said in his Tafsir (interpretation): `Ali ibn Abu Talhah reported from Ibn `Abbas concerning Allah's saying: ﴾He grants Hikmah to whom He pleases﴿ "Hikmah means knowledge of the Qur'an; its abrogating verses and the abrogated ones, its Muhkamat (clearly decided Qur'anic verses, mostly concerning legal rulings) and its Mutashabihat (Qur'anic verses whose meanings are not clear or not completely agreed upon), the early and late Ayahs (Qur'anic verses) and its ordinances, prohibitions and examples." Juwaybir reported from Al-Dah-hak from Ibn `Abbas as saying: Hikmah means the Qur'an i.e. its Tafsir. Ibn `Abbas said that because both the pious and the wicked recite it. (Related by ibn Mardawayh). Ibn Abu Najeeh reported from Mujahid that he said, "Hikmah means: soundness in everything said." Layth ibn Abu Sulaym reported from Mujahid that he said: ﴾He grants Hikmah to whom He pleases﴿ Hikmah does not means prophethood. It means knowledge, Fiqh (jurisprudence) and the Qur'an. Abu Al-`Aliyah said: "Hikmah means fear of Allah, for fearing Allah is on the top of every wise saying." Ibn Mardawayh reported from the way of Baqiyyah from `Uthman ibn Zufar Al-Juhany from Abu `Ammar Al-Asady from Ibn Mas`ud as saying: ﴾The peak of wisdom (i.e. the understanding of the knowledge of Qur'an) is fear of Allah.﴿ Abu Al-`Aliyah said in one of his narrations that Hikmah is the Book (Qur'an) and its understanding. Ibrahim Al-Nakh`y said: "Hikmah means understanding," Abu Malik said: "Hikmah is the Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet)." Wahb narrated from Malik that Zayd ibn Aslam said: Hikmah means reason Malik said: "Deep in my heart, I think that Hikmah is

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Fiqh (Jurisprudence) in the religion of Allah (i.e. Islam) and it is something which Allah casts into the hearts out of His Mercy and Blessing. An example that clarifies what I said is that sometimes we meet some people who are very rational in life's matters while we meet others who are weak in managing their life's matters but they are knowledgeable of their religion and have deep insight about it. Allah grants some people such insight and deprives others of it. Thus, I can say that Hikmah is Jurisprudence in Islam." End of quotation of Ibn Kathir (may Allah be Merciful with him).

In order to realize the importance of Fiqh in Islam and that it is the light of those who embrace Islam and act according to it in this world and in the Hereafter and to realize its importance and significance, we mention that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾If Allah wants to do good to a person, He makes him comprehend the religion.﴿ (Agreed upon by Al-Bukhari and Muslim).

Moreover, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾The example of guidance and knowledge with which Allah has sent me is like a rain falling on the earth, some of which was fertile soil that absorbed rain water and brought forth vegetation and grass in abundance. (And) another portion of it was hard and held the rain water and Allah benefited the people with it and they utilized it for drinking, making their animals drink from it and for irrigation of the land for cultivation. (And) a portion of it was barren which could neither hold the water nor bring forth vegetation (then that land gave no benefits). The first is the example of the person who comprehends Allah's religion and gets benefit (from the knowledge), which Allah has revealed through me (the Prophet) and learns and then teaches others. The last example is that of a person who does not care for it and does not take Allah's guidance revealed through me (He is like that barren land.)﴿ (Related by Al-Bukhary and Muslim).

The Prophet (peace be upon him) says: ﴾There should be no envy but only in case of two persons: one having been endowed with wealth and power to spend it in the cause of Truth, and (the other) who has been endowed with

wisdom which he uses for judging and teaches it (to others).﴿ (Related by Al-Bukhary, Muslim, An-Nasa'i and Ibn Majah).

The great scholar of this Ummah (nation) and the interpreter of the Qur'an, the venerable Companion `Abdullah ibn `Abbas (may Allah be pleased with them both) is a prominent figure in the knowledge of religion concerning jurisprudence and interpretation. He expanded his knowledge in the sciences of Shari`ah (Islamic law) and comprehended them, thanks to the blessing of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) who used to supplicate Allah for him saying: ﴾O Allah! Make him (Ibn 'Abbas) a learned scholar in religion (Islam), and bestow on him the knowledge of the Book (Qur'an).﴿ Verily, it is a blessed supplication from a blessed Messenger, may Allah accept the supplication from the Prophet (peace be upon him) and it is a blessing that Allah bestowed upon Ibn `Abbas (may Allah be pleased with them both and may Allah please them both). There appeared during his life, before him and after him, some brilliant leading figures who excelled in Usul (principles) of the religion and the legal cases. Some of them were from among the Companions of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and others, who took the responsibility of Tabligh (calling to Islam) and played their role the best they could. They enlightened people with Islam whether in the circles of study, deliberation and guidance spread out in the Houses of Allah (i.e., mosques) or through what they left behind of the scientific heritage and the valuable writings in the different branches of knowledge of the Shari`ah and other sciences, which support Shari`ah and are associated with it. Allah has prepared pious rulers who save no effort in the cause of spreading knowledge and encouraging scholars and students.

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Learning about Islam and its rulings demands research and deliberate study in order to know Allah's ruling in every issue that encounters the Muslim in his life. Thus every Muslim should not bypass any issue without research and study to reach the ruling certified with evidences from the Book of Allah, from the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him), consensus of all scholars, or manifest Qiyas (analogy).

All praise be to Allah, for Islam is clear with neither ambiguity nor confusion in its rulings and laws. Allah has manifested them in His Plain Book and the Sunnah of His honorable Messenger (peace be upon him). In addition, there were some people who held the banner of this Sunnah, explained and defended it; they are the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him), those who righteously followed them from among the Salaf (righteous predecessors) of this Ummah and the Imams (initiators of a School of Jurisprudence) and scholars of the Shari`ah throughout their successive generation. Afterwards, there came a time when many people neglected research, knowledge-seeking and learning but they were satisfied with imitating others which caused them to fall into many mistakes concerning `Aqidah (creed) and rulings.

Allah has commanded us to ask him for guidance to Al-Sirat-ul-Mustaqim (the Straight Path) which is the path taken by the blessed people including the Prophets, the Siddiqûn (those followers of the Prophets who were first and foremost to believe in them), the martyrs and the righteous who sought knowledge and acted according to what they knew. We ask Allah to keep us away from the path of those who earned His anger as they knew Al-Haqq (the Truth) but they followed their desires including the Jews and their likes. We ask Him to keep us away from the path of the stray, who ignored Al-Haqq including the Christians and their likes.

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Dear Muslim brothers! How can we know whether some water is pure or filthy or that a drink, food,

vessel, quarry, bracelet or garment is lawful or unlawful or Makruh (reprehensible) or Mustahab (desirable)? How can we know if owning or spending such money is lawful or unlawful? How could we be guided to the acts of worship, know their due times and the right way to perform them? How could we know the legal distribution of legacies and estates? How could we establish the Hudud (ordained punishments for violating Allah's Law)? How could we carry out the transactions among ourselves and other details of acts of worship, transaction and what we call nowadays personal affairs such as marriage, divorce and the like?

All praise be to Allah, for our Purified Shari`ah has capacity enough to comprise all these matters. Allah has perfected true Islam that every insightful person will find a manifest and obvious ruling and explanation for every little affair of the affairs of this world and the Hereafter.

It is a perfect comprehensive religion, which is neither restricted to the aspects of worship nor separated from the aspects of life, as claimed by the enemies of Islam. It is a religion that builds a strong bond between the creature and his Creator. Moreover, it establishes the best relationship between man and his family and relatives on one hand and on the other hand between man and his brother whether he embraces the same religion or another religion based on justice, connection, tolerance and cooperation in acts of dutifulness and piety. In addition, it had manifested to us how to treat dumb animals with kindness, mercy and benevolence before Europe

showed its affected kindness with animals through certain associations especially established to serve such purposes, while they show no kindness to man and no respect to his rights.

Therefore, Muslims should learn about their religion without the least violation of the ordinances of Allah. They should persist in understanding the rulings of their religion prior to anything else. Some people, whom Allah guided and granted success, may learn about many life sciences and excel in them; however, they know nothing about the rulings of their religion and the secrets of their Shari`ah and they pay no heed to such matters. This is really a shameful ignorance and a great disaster as the knowledge of Allah's rulings should be put before any other knowledge. There is no objection to learn about other sciences and knowledge but it is obligatory to prefer the origin and cornerstone to all sciences, which is the knowledge of Allah with His Names and Attributes, the worship due to Allah Alone and the knowledge of His religion (i.e. Islam) including `Aqidah, acts of worship, manners and rulings that a Muslim should not ignore. Moreover, Muslims should hold fast to their religion truthfully and sincerely and accept its ordinances and act according to them in all their lives affairs with no exception. Let Muslims know that if they abide by this, they will gain happiness and success in this world and in the Hereafter.

Allah has honored and blessed this Ummah with this religion, so if they fail to achieve such a matter, they will have no value, honor, or happiness.

We ask Allah to guide us and all Muslims to that which pleases Him, to safeguard all of us from the deceptive temptations, the evils of our souls and our bad deeds and to grant all of us the blessing of learning about His religion, abiding by it and calling to it with deep insight. Moreover, we ask Allah to set right the rulers of Muslim people, enable them to support Al-Haqq and gather them on the word of guidance. Verily Allah is the Owner of everything and He has the power over everything. May peace and blessings be upon His Servant and Messenger, our Prophet Muhammad, his family, and Companions!

145- the virtue of knowledge and the status of scholars

All praise be to Allah, Lord of the Worlds. The good end shall be for the pious. Peace and blessings be upon the Servant and Messenger of Allah, the best of His Creation whom He entrusted with His Wahy (Revelation), our Imam and master Muhammad ibn `Abdullah, and upon his family, Companions, and whoever follows his way and guidance until the Day of Resurrection.

This is a brief about the virtue of knowledge and the status of scholars. Evidence from the Qur'an and the Sunnah (whatever is reported from the Prophet) indicate the virtue of knowledge and comprehension of Din (religion) of Islam and the related good,

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abundant rewards, and good end promised for those whom Allah (Exalted be He) has set their intentions right and guided them.

In this regard, there are many Nusus (Islamic texts from the Qur'an or the Sunnah). It is enough to do honor to knowledge and scholars the fact that Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) asked scholars to testify to His Oneness and told us that they are only those who fear Him perfectly and completely. Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾Allâh bears witness that Lâ ilâha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He), and the angels, and those having knowledge (also give this witness); (He always) maintains His creation in Justice. Lâ ilâha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He), the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.﴿ Allah (Glorified be He) asked the angels and scholars to testify to His Oneness. Scholars know Allah and His Din, fear Him as if they are seeing Him, and stay away from His Prohibitions. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾It is only those who have knowledge among His slaves that fear Allâh.﴿

It is well known that every Muslim fears Allah (Exalted be He), but those who fear Him completely are the scholars, at the head of whom are the messengers (peace be upon them) followed by scholars but with varying degrees of fearing Allah. Scholars are the successors of the prophets. Indeed, it is a must to fear Allah (Exalted be He), but those who are most fearful of Allah are the scholars who know Allah by His Names, Attributes, and Rights. Prophets and messengers (peace be upon them) are the foremost in this regard,

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followed by scholars but with varying degrees regarding their knowledge of Allah and His Din.

It was authentically reported in the Two Sahih (authentic) Books of Hadith (i.e. Al-Bukhari and Muslim) on the authority of Mu`awiyah (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾"If Allah wants to do good to a person, He makes them comprehend Din."﴿

This wonderful Hadith has other narrations from several Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet - may Allah be pleased with them). It indicates that the signs of goodness and happiness are represented in comprehending Allah's Din. For every sincere student in any university, academic institute, or elsewhere seeking to acquire knowledge, we ask Allah to guide them and to help them attain their goals.

If a person turns away from comprehending Din, this is a sign that Allah (Exalted be He) does not want to bestow goodness upon them. There is neither might nor power except with Allah!

It was related by Al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Abu Musa (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ("The example of guidance and knowledge with which Allah has sent me is like rain falling on the earth; some of which became fertile soil that absorbed rainwater and brought forth vegetation and grass in abundance. (And) another portion of it was hard and held the rainwater

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and Allah benefited the people with it as they utilized it for drinking, making their animals drink from it, and for irrigation of the land for cultivation. (And) a portion of it was barren and could neither hold the water nor bring forth vegetation (then that land gave no benefits). The (first) is the example of the person who comprehends Allah's Din and obtains benefit (from the knowledge) which Allah has revealed through me (the Prophet) and learns and then teaches others. The (last) example is that of a person who does not care for it and does not follow Allah's guidance revealed through me (he is like that barren land).")

Thus, scholars who are guided to have this knowledge are divided into two groups. One group have acquired knowledge, acted according to it, comprehended it, and deduced rulings from it. Consequently, they have become Fuqaha' (Muslim jurists), who memorize knowledge, convey it to others, and help them to comprehend it. They hold different professions of knowledge and comprehension of Din, such as being teachers or Du`ah (callers to Islam).

The second group are those who have acquired knowledge and conveyed it to those who have deduced rulings from it. Both groups are greatly rewarded and greatly benefit the Ummah (nation based on one creed).

However, most people are like the barren land, which could neither hold water nor bring forth vegetation because they are negligent, shun knowledge, and do not care about acquiring it.

Scholars and seekers of knowledge will attain great rewards if their intentions are sincere and truthful in their acquisition of knowledge. It is an honor for scholars to comprehend Allah's Din and contemplate what Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) revealed in terms of guidance and knowledge.

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They must compete in this regard and resort to patience to endure hardships, because knowledge cannot be acquired except through hard work and patience. Imam Muslim (may Allah be merciful with him) in his Sahih Book of Hadith, in the chapter of Prayer Times, mentioned some Sanads (chains of narrators) in which he related that Yahya ibn Abu Kathir (may Allah be merciful with him) said, "Knowledge shall not be acquired without exhausting one's body." He meant to stress the fact that to acquire knowledge and comprehension of Din, one has to be patient, persistent, careful, timesaver, and sincere to Allah (Exalted be He), seeking only His Pleasure.

The scholarly houses and Masjids (mosques) in which knowledge of the Shari`ah (Islamic law) is taught and Halaqahs (learning circles) are held have great status as they are made to benefit the people and solve their problems.

Graduates of such institutes are expected to have an elevated status and confer great public benefits. Thus, any one whom Allah (Exalted be He) has endowed with knowledge should not refrain from benefiting others; rather they must help them to comprehend their Din, and remind them of Allah, His Rights, and His Servants' rights, whether by engaging in teaching, judging, preaching, or studying with colleagues in public and private meetings. Scholars have to participate in spreading knowledge

via mass media, because this entails great benefit and conveys knowledge to whom Allah wills all over the world.

This will absolutely have great good and yield public benefits to Muslims in this age. There is a dire need for knowledge in this age in particular because of the lack of knowledge and the increase in the numbers of callers to falsehood.

Therefore, whoever is endowed with knowledge has to endure hardships for the sake of benefiting the people, whether by judging, teaching, calling to Allah, or engaging in any other affair that would be of great benefit to Muslims.

Seekers of knowledge try to benefit themselves by getting rid of ignorance and drawing closer to their Lord (Glorified and Exalted be He) by means of doing that which pleases Him with sure knowledge. Likewise, they try to benefit the people by taking them out of darkness to light, settling differences among them, teaching the ignorant ones, guiding those who are astray, enjoining them to do good, and forbidding them from doing evil.

Hence, the duty of seekers of knowledge comprises many tasks, especially the judge. If Allah (Exalted be He) guides the judge and makes him patient, his job shall include many responsibilities; as the judge is considered a scholar, a teacher, a person who enjoins good and forbids evil, a Da`y (caller to Islam), a pious person, and so on. He has to prepare himself to endure hardships for the Sake of Allah (Exalted be He)

and to be resolute, following in the footsteps of the Salaf (righteous predecessors) and Imams (may Allah be merciful with them all) who benefited the people as much as they could.

I advise scholars, seekers of knowledge, and all Muslims to be patient in this regard, continue their efforts for the sake of Al-Haqq (the Truth), not to waste their time, and discuss with each other what they might find difficult to understand. This would help them to acquire ample knowledge that will benefit them and all Muslims in sha'a Allah (if Allah wills). However, they must be keen on setting their intentions right and being sincere in everything that draws them closer to their Lord and benefits the people.

Scholars who are fearful of Allah must dedicate themselves to judge between the people and teach them, for this will definitely benefit the people, solve their problems, and make justice prevail among them.

It is known that judiciary is a profession which grants great rewards and high ranks for those whom Allah has granted good intentions and useful knowledge, and helped to intend good for Muslims.

Although it is not an easy profession and the Salaf used to fear engaging into it, the current circumstances and age urgently require a scholar who judges between the people with sure knowledge, fears Allah, and keeps His Limits when solving their problems.

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Accordingly, any one whom Allah (Exalted be He) qualifies to judge between the people and grants him knowledge and insight and the people need him badly should not refuse to undertake this duty. He has to accept this job, be prepared to work according to his knowledge, carry out what is required of him, benefit the people with what he knows, and ask his Lord to grant him success and assist him. However, if he finds out that he is unable to do so, he can apologize and quit this job.

It must be stressed that he should not refuse the job from the very beginning. In fact, people of Iman (Faith) and knowledge who are able to benefit others must not open the door to such refusals. Rather, they must have a strong will, a good intention, and the desire to benefit Muslims and solve the problems they face so as not to leave room for the ignorant to take on this task. People must have judges to solve their problems and settle their differences. If the right people are not assigned this role, others will be assigned it.

Scholars and everyone who fears Allah should be fully aware of this obligation, confidently anticipate Allah's Recompense, endure what they face, and ask Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) for reward. It was authentically reported that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: ﴾"Allah does not take away knowledge by taking it away from the people's hearts, but He takes it away by the death of scholars. When no scholar remains, people will take as their leaders ignorant persons who - when consulted - will give their verdict

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without knowledge. They will, consequently, go astray and will lead the people astray."﴿ (Related by Al-Bukhari and Muslim in their Two Sahih Books of Hadith on the authority of `Abdullah ibn `Amr ibn Al-`As (may Allah be pleased with them both))

Accordingly, the seriousness of losing scholars and the bad consequences of assigning their roles to others become clear to the people of knowledge and Iman.

It is well known that if a scholar, whether he is a judge or not, makes Ijtihad (juristic effort to infer expert legal rulings) and is correct, he will have two rewards; and if he is mistaken, he shall have one reward - as authentically reported from the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him). Therefore, he shall have no fear of the probability of being sinful as long as he is truthful, sincere, and traces Al-Haqq. Fear and danger must be anticipated when an ignorant person is appointed as judge or Mufty (Islamic scholar qualified to issue legal opinions) and issues unjust rulings. On the authority of Buraydah (may Allah be pleased with him) who narrated that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾"There are three (types of) judges; two of them will be thrown into the Fire while only one of them will be admitted into Jannah (Paradise). The (judge) who will be admitted into Jannah is a man who knows what is right and gives judgment accordingly. (The other two are) a man who knows what is right but gives unfair judgments and he will enter the Fire, and a man who gives judgments unknowingly and he will enter the Fire."﴿ (Related by Abu Dawud, Al-Tirmidhy, Al-Nasa'y, and Ibn Majah and is ranked as Sahih by Al-Hakim)

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Thus, the one who seeks Al-Haqq, does his best to work accordingly, and seeks to benefit the Muslims shall have one or two rewards as indicated in the Hadith referred to.

I advise all Muslims in general and scholars and seekers of knowledge in particular and myself to fear Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) in all matters and to work according to their knowledge, by doing all that Allah has ordained and keeping away from all that He has forbidden. Seekers of knowledge are good examples for others in what they do, whether when they judge between people or undertake any other task, or on their way home, when meeting people, in their cars, while travelling, and so on. They are role models for others and, thus, must fear Allah and work according to the knowledge which Allah (Glorified be He) has granted them. Even more, they must call the people to what is good by their sayings and deeds so that they would be distinguished from others and known for their knowledge, virtue, guidance, and adoption of the Straight Path followed by the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) and his honorable Sahabah (may Allah be pleased with them); along with being modest and avoiding arrogance.

Scholars and seekers of knowledge face dangerous sorts of temptation; such as Riya' (showing-off) and arrogance, in addition to other dangers related to various aspects and intentions. They have to fear Allah, work sincerely for His Sake, bear into mind that Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) is watching them at all times, and be modest with Allah's Servants. Also, they must not feel prideful because of the knowledge Allah has provided them with and deprived other people from.

They have to thank Allah by being modest and spreading knowledge in Masjids and elsewhere.

The judge preaches the people when necessary, teaches the seekers of knowledge, calls to Allah, enjoins what is good, forbids what is evil, does his best to reform the Muslims' affairs, and corresponds with rulers regarding issues requiring his advice. Thus, he should always work for the benefit of Muslims by engaging in everything that proves his sincerity and elevates the status of Islam and Muslims.

I advise all Muslims, especially scholars and seekers of knowledge, to hold fast to the Noble Qur'an, for it is the greatest and noblest book which contains the best and most useful of all knowledge. It is well known that it is the best support in comprehending Din, contemplating it, fearing Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He), and following the example of the righteous people. I advise myself and all to contemplate the Qur'an, recite it frequently during the day and the night, and make it our reference in all matters. I recommend referring to Tafsir (exegesis of the meanings of the Qur'an) whenever we find anything difficult to understand, because the Qur'an is the best and most truthful book. Allah (Glorified be He) says: ﴾Verily, this Qur'ân guides to that which is most just and right﴿

Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) also says: ﴾And We have sent down to you the Book (the Qur'an) as an exposition of everything, a guidance, a mercy, and glad tidings for those who have submitted themselves (to Allâh as Muslims).﴿

Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾Say: "It is for those who believe, a guide and a healing."﴿

Allah (Glorified be He) says: ﴾We have neglected nothing in the Book﴿ All believers in general and scholars in particular are required to give due care to the Noble Quran, to hold fast to it, and to do their best to contemplate it, work according to it, and refer to the opinions of Mufassirs (exegetes of the Qur'an) regarding things which they might find difficult to understand. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾(This is) a Book (the Qur'ân) which We have sent down to you, full of blessings, that they may ponder over its Verses, and that men of understanding may remember.﴿

He (Glorified be He) also says: ﴾Do they not then think deeply in the Qur'ân, or are their hearts locked

up (from understanding it)?》

Likewise, Muslims have to give due care to the Sunnah of the Messenger (peace be upon him) by memorizing as much as they can of it and increasing their study of it, especially the issues related to `Aqidah (creed) and the duties of the Mukallaf (person meeting the conditions to be held legally accountable for their actions)

which must be given utmost attention. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: 《Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم to mankind): "If you (really) love Allâh then follow me (i.e. accept Islâmic Monotheism, follow the Qur'ân and the Sunnah), Allâh will love you and forgive you your sins.》

There is no way to follow the Prophet (peace be upon him) perfectly except by studying his Sunnah and giving utmost attention to it along with the Qur'an.

I also advise scholars and seekers of knowledge to pay much attention to Hadith books, read them a lot, teach them, and study them. The most important of these books are the Two Sahih Books of Hadith, then the Six Compilations of Hadith (Al-Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Dawud, Al-Tirmidhy, Al-Nasa'y, and Ibn Majah), Muwatta' of Imam Malik, the Musnad (Hadith compilation) of Imam Ahmad, Sunan (Hadith compilations classified by jurisprudential themes) of Al-Darimy, along with other well-known Books of Hadith. May Allah multiply the reward of their compilers for benefiting Muslims!

Attention must then be directed to the books of scholars who are well known for their true `Aqidah and great knowledge of Shari`ah. Those eminent scholars include Shaykh-ul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah and his two students; the prominent scholar Ibn Al-Qayyim and Al-Hafizh ibn Kathir (may Allah be merciful with them all) as they excelled in this regard, spread much knowledge among Muslims, and explained to them the `Aqidah of Ahl-ul-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah (those adhering to the Sunnah and the Muslim main body) as substantiated with evidence from the Sunnah and the Qur'an.

The most important books compiled by Shaykh-ul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah (may Allah be merciful with him) are Minhaj Al-Sunnah, Majmu` Al-Fatawa (Fatawa Collections), Mutabaqat Sarih Al-Ma`qul li Sahih Al-Manqul, Al-Jawab Al-Sahih fil-Radd `ala man baddala dinal-Masih,

and other useful books indicating the true `Aqidah and rulings and refuting the allegations of the enemies of Islam.

amongst the best books written by Ibn Al-Qayyim (may Allah be merciful with him) are Al-Turuq Al-Hakimah, A`lam Al-Muwaqqi`in, and Zad Al-Ma`ad. These books have great benefits, especially for judges and Muftys.

Likewise, it is important to read the Fatwas (legal opinion issued by a qualified Muslim scholar) of chief Du`ah, such as Al-Durar Al-Suniyyah written by Shaykh-ul-Islam Muhammad ibn `Abdul-Wahhab; it includes useful essays and answers for the Shaykh and some of his students. I also recommend Muslims to read Fatwas of our prominent Shaykh Muhammad ibn Ibrahim Al Al-Shaykh (may Allah be merciful with him) for it contains beneficial knowledge and great benefits.

I advise Muslims to read the foregoing books after the Qur'an and the Sunnah, for they help in achieving all that is good.

I also recommend reading similar useful books that provide evidence from the Qur'an, the Sunnah, and the sayings of scholars, such as Al-Mughny, Sharh Al-Madh-hab, Al-Muhalla, and other similar books. These books are of great importance to all seekers of knowledge, including judges and others.

I ask Allah with His Most Beautiful Names and Attributes to guide us and all Muslims to useful

knowledge and good deeds, grant us good intention,

patience, comprehension of Din, and reward us with the good end in this life and in the Hereafter, as Allah (Exalted be He) is Most Generous. I also ask Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) to guide all Muslim rulers, set their retinue aright, assist them to do all that is good, make them support Al-Haqq and refute falsehood, assist them to seek judgment from the Qur'an and the Sunnah in everything, and keep us all safe from our evils and bad deeds. Verily, Allah is All-Hearer, Ever Near. May peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family, and Companions!

A word on the occasion of the competition of memorizing the Noble Qur'anand the Hadiths of the Prophet (peace be upon him) in Al-Qasim

Praise be to Allah! We praise Him and seek His Help! We seek His Forgiveness and refuge from the evil of ourselves and our bad deeds! May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon His Servant and Messenger our Prophet Muhammad and upon his family and Companions. To commence:

Verily, Allah sent Muhammad (peace be upon him) with the truth and gave him the Book and wisdom i.e. the Noble Qur'an and Sunnah as stated in the Hadith narrated by Ahl-ul-Sunan (authors of Hadith compilations classified by jurisprudential themes) through an authentic Sanad (chain of narrators) that he (peace be upon him) said: ﴾I have been granted the Qur'an and something like it (i.e. the Sunnah).﴿

The Noble Qur'an and Sunnah are the two sources upon which rulings are based. By the Mercy of Allah upon the Muslim nation that He (Exalted be He) destined certain people to memorize the Noble Qur'an and Sunnah.

Since the early ages and until now, the Muslim nation maintains the Noble Qur'an through memorizing, studying, understanding, contemplating, interpreting, learning, and teaching. Praise be to Allah for that because such schools and governmental and charitable societies bring up young people on memorizing, understanding, and acting according to Allah's Book, and that pleases every Muslim. The thing which doubles our rejoice is to find out that the memorizers of the Noble Qur'an

as well as others are keen to understand the subjects of Shari`ah (Islamic law) and to study, memorize, learn, and teach the Sunnah of the Prophet.

Actually, the sessions of knowledge, which are held in Masjids (mosques) all over the region of Al-Qasim and other places aiming to teach the sciences of Hadith, jurisprudence, and Tafsir (explanation/exegesis of the meanings of the Qur'an) are gardens of Paradise, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾"When you pass by the gardens of Paradise, avail yourselves of them." The Companions asked: "What are the gardens of Paradise, O Messenger of Allah?" He replied: "The circles of Dhikr (remembrance of Allah)."﴿

There are authentic Hadiths related from the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) stating that the angels call upon one another to attend such sessions.

We praise Allah for the presence and amount of these sessions as well as the multiplicity of the number of people who attend them willingly. We ask Allah to bless the work of those sponsoring them, double their reward, endow them with sincerity and reward them with the best reward.

It is considerable to approve the due attention given to the Prophetic tradition in a time where ignorant and people of Bida' (rejected innovations in religion) shun away from the Sunnah and object to it.

It is obligatory to contribute to the spread of the Sunnah where teaching it is one of the best acts that draws one close to Allah as well as the best acts of obedience. The Salaf (Righteous Predecessors) used to teach their students the Hadiths and they were keen to learn it by heart

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and were not just satisfied with writing it down and classifying it in books, especially what pertains to the texts of Hadiths and the concise yet most meaningful words.

It gave me great pleasure to know of the efforts exerted by our brothers in the Scientific Committee and the Office of Da`wah in Al-Qasim to observe, organize, and supervise lessons so as to protect them from excessiveness and negligence and to follow the straight way in doing so. Praise be to Allah for this. May Allah reward the respected Shaykhs, who care and sponsor the project of memorizing the Noble Qur'an and the Sunnah and acquiring knowledge of the religion, because they made students memorize the Noble Qur'an, which took a great deal of their time and effort. They also held exams and competitions to encourage students to seek knowledge, in addition to their contribution in printing and distributing useful books, as well as other useful acts. Thus, may Allah reward them for all this with what is best.

It is a good thing to encourage students to memorize the Qur'an and the Sunnah, to hold exams for them and to offer them scholarships and prizes and motivate them as well as others to do good. It is a good, blessed, and appreciated work.

I appeal to our brothers both Shaykhs and seekers of knowledge in all regions to participate in such useful acts i.e. bringing up children on learning and acting according to the Noble Qur'an and the Sunnah. We hope to hear in the future about many charitable works

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like this. Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾So hasten towards all that is good.﴿ Allah (Glorified be He) says: ﴾and for this let (all) those strive who want to strive (i.e. hasten earnestly to the obedience of Allah).﴿ The Prophet (peace be upon him) says: ﴾The best among you (Muslims) are those who learn the Qur'an and teach it.﴿ Narrated by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih (book of authentic Hadiths). The Prophet (peace be upon him) says: ﴾"If Allah wants to do good to a person, He makes him comprehend the religion."﴿ (Agreed upon by Imams Al-Bukhari and Muslim).

On this occasion, I advise all students and teachers to fear Allah (may He be Praised), to have sincere intention and truthfulness in such work. I also urge them to continue seeking knowledge and not to get bored or be helpless. I urge them to combine between both knowledge and practice. Actually, applying what a person has learned is the desired output of knowledge. They also should be keen to recite the Noble Qur'an frequently, study and grasp its meanings, because it is the origin and basis of all sciences. I also urge parents to encourage and facilitate matters for their children to join these sessions. I want to thank all officials, merchants, Shaykhs, and every other person who contributed to hold such a blessed gathering.

May Allah reward them all with the best reward! I also appeal to all Muslims to offer much more contribution in supporting this useful project both financially and spiritually because success and

continuity of any work depends on the available capacities and facilities. It is reported in the authentic Hadith related by Jarir ibn `Abdullah Al-Bajaly (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ("He who sets a good precedent in Islam, there is a reward for him for this (act of goodness) and reward of that also who acted according to it subsequently (until the Day of the Resurrection)...")

We supplicate to Allah to grant all of us success and guidance and make righteous our words and overt and covert deeds. May Allah grant us success! Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon His slave and Messenger, our Prophet Muhammad, his family, Companions and those who followed him rightfully.

147- The Glorious Qur'an is the most important book for knowledge seekers

His Eminence Shaykh `Abdul-`Aziz ibn `Abdullah ibn Baz, the General Mufty (Islamic scholar qualified issue legal opinions) of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the chairman of the Council of Senior Scholars and Departments of Scientific Researches and Ifta' confirmed that the knowledge seeker has great responsibility and plays an important role in calling to Allah away from introversion, violence, power or coarseness. In this way, the public benefit from his knowledge and efforts to be a good example for others.

His Eminence said in a lecture entitled "the duties of knowledge seekers" which he delivered to the university students of Um Al-Qura in the presence of His Eminence, the director of the university, a gathering of professors and the people of knowledge and thought.

It is well-known that seeking knowledge is one of the best acts to Allah (may He be Praised and Glorified) and winning His pleasure. That confirms the importance of knowledge, understanding religion, having useful and good words and actions and being careful of

disobeying and provoking Allah's wrath in order that a Muslim worships his Lord properly based upon knoweldge. This is the target of his creation. ﴾And I (Allâh) created not the jinn and mankind except that they should worship Me (Alone).﴿ However, humans and Jinn should know this in order to worship Him as He commanded.

Shaykh Ibn Baz continued to say: It is obligatory on the legally competent people to understand religion and to know better with the help of resorting to scholars and callers to ask them. People should attend lectures, seminars and read useful books and attend scientific institutions until they know the meaning of worshipping Allah (Exalted be He) whose essence is to unify Allah and fulfill His Rights and the rights of His worship. ﴾Truly, the religion with Allâh is Islâm.﴿ It is obligatory to recognize the purport of worship in order for a person to worship Allah based on knowledge, pure monotheism and sincerity. The least a person can do is to witness that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah to humans and jinn and he is the seal of prophets. These are the basics of our religion.

His Eminence explained that when knowledge seekers play their role in their societies and nations by spreading knowledge and teaching people about `Aqidah (faith),

acts of worship and transactions, they help people to be pious, spread virtue and good and eliminate ignorance about religion. There is no doubt that performing this mission is obligatory for knowledge seekers and we should benefit from the knowledge which they studied by teaching it to their families, brothers, neighbors and colleagues. They should teach them what they need of their religion and warn them against the mistakes that they may commit according to their energies, efforts and knowledge with wisdom and good preaching without violence. They use interesting ways and exhortation in simple and easy ways and have to be a good example to call the people with their tongues and actions without contradiction between their sayings and actions so that people will follow them and learn what they have studied. They should warn them against the sayings and actions they fear without withholding knowledge, an issue or Hadith they may inquire about because scholars are the heirs of Prophets and the successors of the Messengers. It is obligatory on them to convey the message of Allah, teach the public, and be patient to fulfill this hard mission and hope for the reward from Allah.

His Eminence said: Seeking knowledge and understanding religion is an ample way to fear Allah, because the degree of fear is based upon knowledge and understanding. Allah (May He be Exalted) says:

﴾It is only those who have knowledge among His slaves that fear Allâh.﴿ When a person understands the religion of Allah, he will be pious. The most pious people are the messengers and prophets and then scholars. The best thing helping to have knowledge that leads to piety is to memorize and recite the Book of Allah. It is the guidance and the light. Each one of us, especially knowledge seekers must fear Allah, convey the message and advise the people. The winners are those who communicate truthfully with the rulers, people of thought and the public.

His Eminence explained that one of the most books that a knowledge seeker should study is the Glorious Qur'an, the books of the Sunnah such as "Sahih Al-Bukhari" and "Sahih Muslim", Muwatta' of Malik, Bulugh-ul-Maram and the books of `Aqidah.

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148- Commending people to recite, reflect on and act according to the Glorious Qur'an

All praise is due to Allah. May Allah's Peace be upon the Messenger of Allah, his family, his Companions and those who follow his way! To proceed, Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) sent down in the Glorious Qur'an an explanation to everything, guidance, mercy and glad tidings for Muslims. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says in Surah Al-Nahl: (And We have sent down to you the Book (the Qur'an) as an exposition of everything, a guidance, a mercy, and glad tidings for those who have submitted themselves (to Allâh as Muslims).) Allah exhorts His servants to think and reflect on the Qur'an in order to understand His ordinances, act accordingly and abstain from the prohibited matters. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ((This is) a Book (the Qur'ân) which We have sent down to you, full of blessings, that they may ponder over its Verses, and that men of understanding may remember.) Allah (He may be Glorified) says: (Do they not then think deeply in the Qur'ân, or are their hearts locked up (from understanding it)?) Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) informed us that the Qur'an is a cure for people and guides them to the best way, so He says: (Verily, this Qur'ân guides to that which is most just and right)

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i.e. the Qur'an guides people who reflect on it and those who wish to be guided to the best way and most useful for people in this world and the Hereafter. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: (Say: "It is for those who believe, a guide and a healing.") Allah (He may be Glorified) says: (And this is a blessed Book (the Qur'ân) which We have sent down, so follow it and fear Allâh (i.e. do not disobey His Orders), that you may receive mercy (i.e. be saved from the torment of Hell).) So, it is obligatory on all the Mukallaf (persons meeting the conditions to be held legally accountable for their actions) to reflect on the Qur'an, understand, follow and act according to its ordinances because it is the wise message and Al-Sirat-ul-Mustaqim (the Straight Path). Anyone who recites or listens to it has to reflect and understand. A person is either a reciter or a listener and both of them should understand and reflect on this Great Book to act accordingly and realize its greatness and the good, guidance, direction and reform it contains. Praise be to Allah, it is easy for you to recite and listen to it where it is recited on the Qur'an Radio station; day and night which enables you to listen to it whenever you want. You can gather with your friends to listen or recite the Qur'an. You can recite from the copy of the Qur'an or by heart to listen and benefit. Anyone who memorizes the whole volume of the Qur'an or part of it

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can reflect on it even if he does not have a copy of it, so he may recite from memory. It is important for the fully competent people to give much care to this Great Book, reflect on and act according to it and then act according to the Sunnah of the Messenger (peace be upon him), because it contains the explanation of ambiguous matters. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: (And We have also sent

down unto you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه و سلم) the Dhikr [reminder and the advice (i.e. the Qur'ân)], that you may explain clearly to men what is sent down to them❫ Allah (He may be Glorified) says: ❪And We have not sent down the Book (the Qur'an) to you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه و سلم), except that you may explain clearly unto them those things in which they differ, and (as) a guidance and a mercy for a folk who believe.❫ Allah has sent down the Book to His Prophet to explain to people the ordinances which He states in His Book. So, it is obligatory on Muslims to give much care to the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him) to understand the instructions of their Lord and the instructions of their Prophet (peace be upon him) and act accordingly. This morning you listened to this great Surah (Qaf) which the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to recite every Friday during the Friday Khutbah (religious sermon). He used to recite it during Salat-ul-`Eid (the Festival Prayer) as well as Surah (Al-Qamar) because of the exhortation, admonition, stories, the mention of the beginning of creation, the final end, Heaven and hellfire which both Surahs contain. Allah (He may be Glorified) says:

❪Qâf. [These letters (Qâf, etc.) are one of the miracles of the Qur'ân, and none but Allâh (Alone) knows their meanings]. By the Glorious Qur'ân.❫ (Qaf) is one of the scattered letters such as (Ya sin) , (Ta ha) , (Alif Lam Mim) , (Alif Lam Mim Ra), they are all segmental phonemes which are mentioned in the beginning of some Surahs to indicate the greatness of this Qur'an and to prove that it is a great book which is composed of these scattered letters that people know then he made an oath with the Qur'an saying: ❪By the Glorious Qur'ân.❫ Allah made an oath with His words which is the Qur'an. Allah may make an oath of whatever He wills of His creatures. Allah (He may be Glorified) says: ❪By the Glorious Qur'ân.❫ Likewise, the Name and Attributes which Allah uses for oath but a person may not make an oath by any of these creatures as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ❪ Anyone who makes an oath with anything other than Allah has committed Shirk (associating others with Allah in worship).❫ A person must only make an oath with Allah, His Names and Attributes. A person should not make an oath with the Prophet, the Ka`bah, honesty, the honor of so and so or the life of so and so, as done by some people. A person should not make an oath by honesty such as to say:

"by honesty", "by the Prophet", "by the honor", "by your life" because all theses case are abominable and prohibited matters. Allah (may He be Praised and Glorified) says: ❪Nay, they wonder that there has come to them a warner (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) from among themselves. So the disbelievers say: "This is a strange thing!❫ A warner to them, who is Muhammad (peace be upon him) whom they know as being brought up among them and they know his truthfulness, integrity and good morals before being sent as a prophet to warn them: by saying: "Allah says such and such". They wondered about this and denied him despite the fact that the messengers before him came with the same message such as: Nuh (Noah), Hud, Salih, Shu`ayb (Jethro), Lut, Ibrahim (Abraham), Musa (Moses), `Isa (Jesus), Dawud (David), Sulayman (Solomon) and others. The unbelievers said: ❪This is a strange thing!❫ When he commanded, prohibited and informed them that they will be resurrected and rewarded for their actions, they condemned this and said: ❪"When we are dead and have become dust (shall we be resurrected?) That is a far return."❫ Shall we be resurrected, called into account, and rewarded after burial. They condemned this by their limited minds and forgot that He is the One who created them from mean semen as well as their father Adam out of dust and He is able to resurrect them on the Day of Recompense. Their father Adam was created from dust while

they were created of mean semen; the semen of a man and woman, then he was created as a full man who stands, speaks, commands, prohibits, owns, hits and does a lot of things. [Allah says]

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﴾Did We not create you from a despised water (semen)?﴿ A Human is weak because he was created from dust then from semen, so how can he condemn and say: ﴾"When we are dead and have become dust (shall we be resurrected?) That is a far return."﴿ Allah answered them by saying: ﴾We know that which the earth takes of them (their dead bodies), and with Us is a Book preserved (i.e. the Book of Decrees).﴿ Allah knows where the parts of their bodies are and He shall resurrect them on the Day of Recompense to be reckoned for their actions whether good or bad as mentioned above in Surah Al-Taghabun in the previous lesson. Allah (May He be Exalted) says: ﴾The disbelievers pretend that they will never be resurrected (for the Account). Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): Yes! By my Lord, you will certainly be resurrected﴿ (say) O Muhammad: ﴾Yes! By my Lord, you will certainly be resurrected, then you will be informed of (and recompensed for) what you did; and that is easy for Allâh.﴿ Allah (May He be Exalted) says: ﴾Therefore, believe in Allâh and His Messenger (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) and in the Light (this Qur'ân) which We have sent down. And Allâh is All-Aware of what you do.﴿ ﴾Nay, but they have denied the truth (this Qur'ân) when it has come to them, so they are in a confused state (cannot differentiate between right and wrong).﴿ They denied the truth, differed, rebelled and disputed among themselves. The meaning is: to explain that Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) has created the creation from weakness; from dust and created Jinn from a smokeless flame

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of fire and shall resurrect and reckon with them for their actions whether good or evil. So, a person should be ready for this after hearing Allah's saying: ﴾And Allâh has brought you forth from the (dust of) earth? (Tafsir At-Tabari)﴿ ﴾Afterwards He will return you into it (the earth), and bring you forth (again on the Day of Resurrection)?﴿ Allah (may He be Praised and Glorified) says: ﴾He said: "Therein you shall live, and therein you shall die, and from it you shall be brought out (i.e. resurrected)."﴿ Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾Thereof (the earth) We created you, and into it We shall return you, and from it We shall bring you out once again.﴿ This is your final return, O son of Adam, from dust to dust and then you shall be resurrected again. He is the One Who initiates creation then resurrects creatures in the easiest way. However, it is obligatory upon the reasonable people to watch out for these matters and get ready to meet his Lord. The gathering of Hajj reminds people of the Day of Recompense; people gather from all over the world in `Arafat, Muzdalafah and in the surroundings of Makkah in order to fulfill their rites then go back to their countries. This gathering looks like the Day of Recompense when Allah resurrects the creatures; the first and the last, the white and the black, the poor and the rich and kings and subjects; all races are resurrected on the Day of Recompense. Allah (May He be Exalted) says: ﴾Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): "(Yes) verily, those of old, and those of later times.﴿ ﴾"All will surely be gathered together for appointed Meeting of a known Day.﴿

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Then, each person shall be reckoned according to his deeds and some will take their books of reckoning with their right hands and go directly to Paradise while others will be given their books with

their left hands and go directly to Hell. When you look into people's conditions in that gathering and the difference of their colors, languages, needs and clothes, you will remember the Day when Allah will gather the creatures naked, bare-footed and uncircumcised. All of them will come out on the Day of Recompense from graves, seas and everywhere naked and bare-footed until Allah clothes them. They are gathered and assembled to be rewarded for their actions, so beware of that Day. Remember that Day and the only salvation to save you from this destination is the righteous deeds, which you do in this world such as the obedience to Allah and His Messenger. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾Verily, those who believe (in Islâmic Monotheism) and do righteous good deeds, for them are Gardens of Delight (Paradise).﴿ This is their reward if they do righteous deeds. Allah (May He be Exalted) says: ﴾And those who disbelieve and deny our Ayât (proofs, evidence, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) are those who will be the dwellers of the Hell-fire.﴿ This is the reward of the righteous and this is the punishment of the evil-doers. Allah

(Exalted be He) says: ﴾Verily, the Abrâr (the pious believers of Islamic Monotheism) will be in Delight (Paradise);﴿ ﴾And verily, the Fujjâr (the wicked, disbelievers, polytheists, sinners and evil-doers) will be in the blazing Fire (Hell),﴿ So, remember and prepare yourself for that Day. This is one of the benefits which Allah referred to in His saying: ﴾That they may witness things that are of benefit to them (i.e. reward of Hajj in the Hereafter, and also some worldly gain from trade), and mention the Name of Allâh on appointed days (i.e. 10th, 11th, 12th, and 13th day of Dhul-Hijjah)﴿ You may hear some words, advice or a bequeath to benefit from during Hajj and beware of hastiness and inattention. Allah (May He be Exalted) says: ﴾But those who disbelieve turn away from that whereof they are warned.﴿ Allah (He may be Glorified) says: ﴾And surely, We have created many of the jinn and mankind for Hell. They have hearts wherewith they understand not, and they have eyes wherewith they see not, and they have ears wherewith they hear not (the truth). They are like cattle﴿ Such as camels, cows and sheep ﴾nay even more astray﴿ than cattle ﴾They are the heedless ones.﴿ We seek refuge with Allah from that and you do not want to be one of those. Allah (May He be Exalted) says: ﴾Or do you think that most of them hear or understand? They are only like cattle - nay, they are even farther astray from the Path (i.e. even worse than cattle).﴿ Most people are like animals who do not think except about food,

drink, marriage, home, mounts and suchlike. They are heedless and mindless. This is their utmost interest and if their interests become bigger and bigger, they engage themselves in some industries and inventions to live with the people but believers work, gain, invent, do, exert efforts, prepare themselves to the Hereafter, obeying Allah and His Messenger and combining between this and that. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾Whoever works righteousness - whether male or female - while he (or she) is a true believer (of Islâmic Monotheism) verily, to him We will give a good life (in this world with respect, contentment and lawful provision), and We shall pay them certainly a reward in proportion to the best of what they used to do (i.e. Paradise in the Hereafter).﴿ Anyone works righteously out of faith, Allah will make him live a good life and reward him with the best reward he may receive out of His bounty and benevolence.

My advice to you is to fear Allah, get ready for the Hereafter, reflect on the Qur'an and the Sunnah of your Prophet (peace be upon him) and be heedful to attend the sessions of knowledge and have knowledge from a radio station, journals, religious gathering, sermons, admonitions or others. Search after good words and admonition in any journal, Qur'an Radio Station and Nur `Al Al-Darb

Program that contains knowledge and guidance. Likewise, Friday Khutbah (sermon) and speeches

which take place from time to time on occasions and gatherings in order for a Muslim to be aware and mindful lest he should be affected with other streams that may destruct him. No might or strength save in Allah. Today is Thursday and it is the first day of throwing the pebbles (11th of Dhul-Hijjah) and tomorrow is the second day (12th of Dhul-Hijjah) then the actions of Hajj are over. By sunset of tomorrow i.e. Friday, throwing of pebbles are over and whoever misses throwing has to offer a sacrifice. The end of this rite is tomorrow at sunset. There is no harm if anyone rushes to leave on the 12th of Dhul-Hijjah after throwing the pebbles after the decline of the sun. He throws the three pebbles; for each one is seven pebbles after noon then a person may leave to Makkah, if he wants to or to his country if he is rushed after performing Tawaf-ul-Wada` (circumambulation around the Ka`bah on leaving Makkah). If a person wants to stay in Makkah, he may do so; otherwise he should perform Tawaf-ul-Wada` and then retun home. The Messenger (peace be upon him) spent the night of 14th Dhul-Hijjah in Al-Abtah (valley between Makkah and Mina) when he finished Hajj on the 13th of Dhul-Hijjah at sunset.

End of vol. (23) and the vol. (24) is to begin with the second section of the book of knowledge